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The Shape of Things

REPEAL OF THE NEUTRALITY ACT MIGHT seem a mere formality after the issuance of the President's shoot-on-sight order to American naval patrols. One by one the provisions of the act have been whittled away by legal interpretations or administrative rulings. The zones into which American ships are forbidden to enter have been gradually reduced, first by executive interpretation, more recently by Attorney General Biddle's opinion that Eire and all but five of Britain's overseas possessions are excluded from the terms of the act. The State Department further weakened the act by its ruling that Americans escaping from the war zone may travel on belligerent ships. The provision barring loans to belligerents was long since scuttled by the lend-lease program. In fact, the whole policy of all-out aid to the countries resisting aggression stands in direct contradiction to the isolationist philosophy underlying the Neutrality Act. But though the act has been circumvented in many respects, it still remains a formidable barrier to our present national policy. It prevents us from arming our merchant ships and from using American-flag vessels for the shipment of lend-lease cargoes to Britain or European Russia. Administration leaders naturally dislike the prospect of a Congressional battle over repeal, but a showdown must be risked. Repeal by nullification is a subterfuge which should be abandoned in the interest of defense and of honesty.

*

JAPAN'S REFUSAL TO OFFER EVEN HALFWAY decent terms to China appears to have saved this country, temporarily at least, from a humiliating compromise with Tokyo. Instead of abandoning its aggressive aims, as some dispatches had indicated it would, the Japanese government has officially, through its Foreign Minister, reaffirmed its determination to establish a "new order in East Asia," and pointed to Manchoukuo as an illustration of the new order. Reports from the Far East indicate that the danger of a Japanese invasion of Siberia has increased considerably in the past week as a result of Nazi successes in the West. Fear that Japanese protests to Moscow against floating mines are part of the stage setting for invasion has led the Soviets to withdraw a num-

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ber of the wives and children of the embassy staff in Tokyo. The Soviets are also reported to be strengthening their military and naval defenses in the Far East. A Japanese attack, if it is to come, must be made within the next fortnight or so, for winter comes early and is extraordinarily severe in this region and the Japanese have shown themselves to be bad cold-weather fighters.

✶

THERE COULD BE NO WISER CHANGE THAN that which has taken the Office of Export Control from the hands of Brigadier General R. L. Maxwell and placed it in those of Vice-President Wallace, with Milo Perkins in charge. The administration of the Office of Export Control by General Maxwell has been legalistic, pettifogging, and sympathetic toward appeasement. It was his office which whittled down the President's "embargo" on aviation gas for Japan to aviation gas of a certain octane content, negated the scrap embargo for months by limiting it to No. 1 heavy melting, and exempted most of our machine tools from the embargo on basic necessities of the defense program. By placing the Office of Export Control under the new Economic Defense Board the President moved this vital bureau farther away from the State Department. The Vice-President, as chairman of that board, made the best of choices when he picked Perkins to administer the duties of the Office of Export Control. Perkins is not an appeaser or a pettifogger or a brass hat, but one of the most progressive and able administrators in the New Deal. Economic warfare should now take on new vigor and meaning.

✶

REACTIONS TO LINDBERGH'S SPEECH AT Des Moines continue, two weeks after the event, to be vigorous and almost universally unfavorable. Scarcely a newspaper has failed to rebuke the ex-colonel. With the exception of Senator Nye, no one of any consequence has ventured a public defense of Lindbergh's anti-Semitism, and even a few case-hardened fellow-travelers, like Hugh Johnson, Arthur Capper, and Herbert K. Hyde, have fallen away. The Keep America Out of War Congress, organization of liberal and radical non-interventionists, entered a prompt demurrer. Washington observers report that anti-Semitism, which a few weeks ago cropped out almost daily in speeches on the floor of Congress, has not made a single appearance since the Des Moines incident. Probably the most effective, though indirect, answer to Lindbergh was the action taken at the American Legion convention in Milwaukee, which to the surprise of most people gave the government's foreign policy a blanket indorsement. The convention was remarkable for the absence of Lindbergh-America First sentiment. Even the resolution favoring aid to Russia passed with a comfortable majority. On the whole the attempt to inject anti-Semitism and other forms of Nazi demagogy into the discussion of foreign policy seems to have backfired.

✶

THE NOMINATION OF J. M. KEYNES AS A director of the Bank of England is a portent of the revolution by consent which many recent visitors have observed to be making rapid progress in Britain. For the institution over which Sir Montagu Norman has presided for so many years is perhaps the last British stronghold of nineteenth-century financial orthodoxy. With the protagonist of managed money and a compensated economy penetrating its thick walls we can be sure that it will not return to the cult of the golden calf. Sir Montagu, however, is not yet ready to surrender all. At the semi-annual meeting of the bank's shareholders he announced that although he has reached the retiring age of seventy he was going to remain in office for a twenty-third term. It is a tribute to the power residing in the semi-official but privately owned Bank of England that he has lasted so long in the face of constant attack. His obstinacy was rightly blamed for Britain's effort to reintroduce the pre-1914 gold standard after the last war—an effort which cost the country millions of unemployed. He took an active part behind the scenes in the political conspiracy which overthrew the second Labor government in 1931. Finally, as friend and admirer of Dr. Schacht, Sir Montagu Norman was one of the bulwarks of appeasement during the Chamberlain era. It is an ironical fact that Norman, always an opponent of planned economy at home, should have lent his moral support to Schacht, who did so much to adapt Keynes's ideas to Hitler's purposes. Now Keynes, who already has won a position of great influence at the Treasury, is going to have a chance to wield a new economic broom in the dusty recesses of Britain's financial holy of holies.

✶

NAZI TERROR HAS SO FAR FAILED TO STEM the upsurge of popular resistance to Hitler's rule in the captive countries. Berlin admits that at least 295 persons, including women, have been put to death since August 1, most of them victims of the barbarous practice of shooting hostages. In Norway mass arrests continue, and the Quislingites are said to be trying to get hold of trade-union archives preparatory to staging a mass trial of labor leaders. In France conditions are rapidly approaching open insurrection despite the shooting of some thirty-five patriots in reprisal for attacks on the German armed forces and their French puppets. The extent and strength of the ferment within France can be roughly gauged by the extreme measures taken to suppress its manifestations. In addition to the indiscriminate shooting of hostages, a strict eight-o'clock curfew has

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been imposed in Paris. Marshal Pétain has made another radio appeal to the French people asking that they cease their attacks upon the Nazis. In Belgium the Nazis have issued a warning that at least five hostages will be shot for every German attacked. By such acts of repression the Nazis have forfeited all hope of winning support among the conquered peoples.

*

MAYOR LAGUARDIA'S SUPPORTERS WERE frankly apprehensive last week over the results in the New York City primaries. Although he won the Republican nomination from John R. Davies, who campaigned as an anti-New Deal isolationist, the Mayor ran behind in two counties and was strongly opposed in two more. Equally disquieting was the surprisingly low total vote, interpreted by some observers as a sign of the apathy on which Democrats have been counting to reduce LaGuardia's strength among independent voters. Leftist victories in the American Labor Party primary, in which LaGuardia was unopposed, gave an additional issue to the Democrats and further endangered his chances of reelection. Troubled reform leaders found no solace in the acceptance speech of William O'Dwyer, Democratic nominee, who denounced anti-Semitism and unequivocally supported President Roosevelt's foreign policy. Although Coughlinite influence in the Democratic Party is increasingly evident, O'Dwyer's speech probably upset any possibility of uniting the Jewish and interventionist vote against him. LaGuardia was still the favorite as the week closed, but odds were slowly being whittled down.

*

THE RUMOR THAT PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT, in some unspecified manner, is going to "call off" the Congressional elections in 1942 so that he can carry on his interventionist plans without interference by the American people was first launched in the New York *Daily News* of August 9. It has been going the rounds ever since. It is a new version of the old charge that the President intends to set up a dictatorship, and it would probably have run its course, like the earlier variations on the same theme, if Arthur Krock, Washington editor of the New York *Times,* had not given it status in his column of September 18. In his blandest manner Mr. Krock not only took the rumor seriously; he wrote as if the only question now was how this legerdemain might be accomplished. "Is There a Way," ran the headline, "to Dispense with Elections?" As a matter of fact, his own article demonstrated that if anyone as shrewd as Mr. Roosevelt really did aspire to become a dictator, he would not choose this particular method. But instead of dismissing the rumor, a conclusion which the logic of his own argument called for, Mr. Krock sent the balloon into the air once more in his last paragraph. "But suppose the fear now being expressed," he wrote ominously, "should prove to be justified . . . who could do anything about it?" Mr. Krock has been carrying on for some time one of the most partisan of all campaigns against the Administration—in the most pompous prose in the trade; but he has struck a new low in perpetuating for his purposes a stupid and dangerous rumor.

*

THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE COMMISSION IS to be commended for its courage and clearsightedness in holding that a community of interest between the two firms makes it illegal for J. P. Morgan and Company to act as indenture trustee for securities underwritten by Morgan, Stanley and Company. The intent, if not the letter, of securities legislation has already been violated by permitting the Morgans and other great private bankers to organize underwriting affiliates. It would have been a pity if the SEC had permitted a similar circumvention to take place under the Trust Indenture Act of 1940. One of the principal duties of the trustee is to check closely on the underwriter, and obviously this check cannot be relied on when trustee and underwriter are the same firm or closely linked firms. It is true that partners in J. P. Morgan and Company recently divested themselves of stock holdings in Morgan, Stanley and Company, but Thomas W. Lamont's wife, the Lamont family holding corporation, and the son and legatee of Horatio Gates Lloyd, Morgan partner, still hold stock in the underwriting firm. No rule is more important for protection of investors than that which keeps the functions of buyer, seller, and trustee in the money market completely independent of each other. Most of the abuses of the past have arisen because the same firm or bank acted as all three, and it is most encouraging to see the SEC hew to this line, though the chips fall on Morgan and Company.

*

LAST SEPTEMBER TWO PROMINENT GERMAN anti-fascists, Dr. Rudolf Hilferding and Dr. Rudolf Breitscheid, arrived in Marseilles. Having been lucky enough to obtain American visas, they were about to sail for the United States and safety when they were ordered back to Arles in unoccupied France. Five months later, so the tale runs, they were informed by the French authorities that they were being removed to Vichy so that they would not be kidnaped by the Gestapo. Instead, they were taken to the demarcation line and turned over to the Germans. Last week it was reported in Berlin that Dr. Hilferding had been found hanged in a prison cell somewhere in occupied France—and suicide has long since been recognized as a synonym for murder when the victim is an anti-fascist caught by the Gestapo. The death of Dr. Hilferding adds another gruesome entry to the record of Nazi brutality, but the complicity and sadism of Vichy in the persecution of two helpless men seem to us even more revolting. Our disgust centers

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nearer home when we consider that other anti-fascists in France are headed for the same fate through being refused American visas by our own State Department—to which Vichy's representative is still *persona grata.*

Strategy and Supplies

THE Anglo-American delegation headed by Lord Beaverbrook and W. A. Harriman is reported to have arrived in Moscow—far too many weeks after the President and Mr. Churchill first proposed its dispatch and received a prompt reply from Stalin. We hope it will now make up for lost time by rapidly concerting plans with the Russians on the general strategy of the war, for lack of coordination between Britain, America, and Russia can only play into the hands of Hitler.

However much Nazi claims are discounted, there can be no denying that the situation on the eastern front has deteriorated seriously in the past week. Leningrad, it is true, appears to be holding firm, but the Germans have made some progress in clearing its outer defenses in the Baltic. In the central district, east of Smolensk, the much-advertised Soviet offensive does not seem to have developed into more than a series of local counter-attacks not sufficiently weighty to divert Nazi forces from other parts of the line. It was completely unable to check the German break-through at Kiev, which, together with the advance beyond the neck of the Crimean Peninsula, leaves all the eastern Ukraine open to the invaders. Berlin declares that thirty Red Army divisions have been caught within its pincers and broken up, but it is probable that this claim will prove as exaggerated as were similar ones in the past.

Nevertheless, during the last three months Russian losses both of men and material have undoubtedly been extremely heavy. There are plenty of trained reserves to fill the gaps, but the problem of keeping them supplied with adequate quantities of weapons is not easily solved now that some of the most important Russian industrial areas have been overrun. Moscow is urgently pleading for supplies from this country and Britain, but it is also asking for military action in the west which will compel Hitler to divide his forces. In London authoritative spokesmen have declared that Britain has neither enough equipment nor enough men to risk a Continental invasion at this date. But even if this proves unduly pessimistic, Russia cannot expect both a large-scale diversion and a flood of war material.

What is possible is a new British stroke in Libya, where campaigning weather is now returning. Throughout the summer the British naval and air forces in the Mediterranean have kept up an unrelenting attack on the Axis supply lines. At the same time the British army in Egypt has been strongly reinforced, and it may be in a position not merely to repeat but to better Wavell's advance of last December. The complete conquest of Italian Africa remains a strategic objective of the highest importance. It would provide the best possible guaranty against any attempt by Vichy to hand over its North African colonies to Germany; it would add to the growing demoralization of the Italians; and it might even open the way for a landing in Sicily. But again the question arises: Can Britain afford to reduce its reserves of planes and tanks in the Near East for the benefit of Russia and also undertake a large-scale offensive?

That is the kind of conundrum for which the Moscow conference must find an answer. It must also give very serious attention to the question of Turkey. Reports from the Balkans suggest that Germany will shortly force a showdown with Ankara. The Turkish government may be invited to open the Dardanelles to Axis warships and to render other assistance in the conquest of the Black Sea. The penalty, in the event of refusal, would be invasion, with the Bulgarians forced to provide at least part of the necessary cannon-fodder. Should Turkey decide to resist—and most observers believe that it would, despite some wavering in the Turkish Cabinet—then it would be essential, both on military and political grounds, for Britain to render all possible aid. In fact, recent reports from Syria speak of heavy concentrations of material on the Turkish frontier ready for immediate dispatch if Ankara gives the signal.

To the difficulty of providing against such contingencies while simultaneously giving full aid to the Soviets must be added the difficulties of communication between Russia and the West. The shortest available supply line is to Archangel, but that port is isolated from the main fighting areas and moreover is barred by ice in the winter. The joint Anglo-Russian occupation of Iran has thrown open a new route which should prove invaluable. But the landing of supplies at the Persian Gulf involves a fifteen-thousand-mile voyage round the Cape from Britain or an almost equally long trip across the Pacific from the United States. And even when supplies have been put ashore, their delivery to the fighting front will be handicapped by the limited capacity of the Iranian railroads and highways.

Despite all such difficulties it is essential that America and Britain pour into Russia all the material which can possibly be scraped together. With the best will in the world we can hardly expect to make up for more than a fraction of what the Red Army has lost in the past three months. But every plane and tank counts and not only because of military but also because of moral value. The Red Army has shown a tremendous capacity for dogged resistance; it deserves every encouragement to go on resisting inch by inch. It has still vast spaces and vast resources behind it. Even if it is being forced to give more and more ground, it is weakening the Nazis, per-

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haps to a greater degree than we can now realize, for the fruits of attrition are a slow growth. In the past two weeks we have shed the complacency which half-persuaded us to sit back and watch Russia strangle Hitler. That is all to the good, but we should not rebound violently into the depths of despair. We should rather determine grimly to get on with our job and to give the Russians the aid and hope that will enable them to do theirs.

Speed Lend-Lease Aid

IN ASKING for an additional $5,985,000,000 for the lend-lease program, President Roosevelt urged that there be "no interruption in the flow of aid to those countries whose defense is vital to our own." With his request for additional funds there can be no legitimate quarrel. It has been evident since last spring that the original appropriation of $7 billion was just a beginning and that several times that amount might be needed before Hitler was defeated. But the President's request was badly timed in that it came but a few days after his singularly disheartening report on the first six months of operations under the Lend-Lease Act. The fact is that the flow of aid to the countries fighting aggression can hardly be described as even a trickle. Excluding food and raw materials, the total of defense materials actually exported to Britain and China under the act during these vital six months has amounted to a mere $72,000,000—as contrasted with the $1,300,000,000 worth which was to be transferred from existing stocks of the army and navy. No details are given as to exactly how many tanks, bombers, and fighter aircraft have reached the anti-Axis powers since passage of the Lend-Lease Act, but we know their total value to have been only $34,000,000—enough, perhaps, to replace a few days' losses on the eastern front.

Fortunately, as the President points out, these lend-lease deliveries do not comprise the only materials that have been moving to the countries defending themselves against aggression. Mr. Roosevelt stresses the fact that our total exports to the British Empire since the beginning of the war are valued at approximately $4,400,000,000. That is a huge amount. But its significance can only be measured if we compare it with Germany's war potential. Britain can hope to win the war only if our assistance gives it unquestioned material superiority over Nazi Germany. This it does not remotely do. For Hitler obtained materials worth about $3 billion from France alone during the first year of the occupation, and an additional $1½ billion worth from the other countries of Europe. Thus Germany has obtained as much in one year from the occupied regions of continental Europe as the whole of the British Empire has received from the United States in two years. And Germany's own production of war material greatly exceeds that of the British Empire.

Practically all the lend-lease assistance so far has gone to Britain. A small amount has been given to China and the Dutch East Indies, and still smaller amounts to the exile armies of Poland, Norway, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Yugoslavia. The country which is today bearing the brunt of resistance to Hitler—the Soviet Union—has received virtually no aid from this country beyond that paid for out of its own funds. Three months have passed since the invasion of Russia provided the democracies with an unexpected new front in the struggle against Hitler. During this period the United States has advanced a pitiful $20,000,000 in credits to the Soviet government. Of this, $10,000,000 was advanced against gold to be delivered in this country—a credit granted, according to Secretary Morgenthau, so that United States manufacturers and producers who had been selling to Amtorg could get their money promptly. The remaining $10,000,000 represented the amount advanced out of the $100,000,000 credit to be provided against the delivery of Soviet raw materials to this country. So far about the only material assistance that the Soviets have received from the United States has been a few tankers of high-test gasoline, paid for out of funds previously on deposit in this country.

There are many factors to explain this disheartening record. The most obvious one is the time required to expand plants, provide machinery, and fabricate the complicated weapons of modern warfare. But this does not explain the failure of the Administration to turn over large amounts of existing army and navy equipment as provided for by Congress. Nor does it bear on our failure to advance material aid to the Soviets while such assistance can do some good. For the plain fact is, despite Mr. Harriman's journey to Moscow, that no real aid has been planned for Russia except that forwarded by Britain. The United States has made no provision for financial assistance on the scale needed. Although the President did not explicitly exclude the Soviet Union in appealing for a second lend-lease appropriation, it appears to be generally understood that none of these funds are to be used for shipments to the eastern front. Presumably the question of a loan to the Soviets is to be considered later. It would seem almost an established rule in the American aid program that no country is to receive our assistance until it has resisted aggression for at least a year.

Whatever our attitude may be toward the economic and political policies of the Soviet Union, that country is putting up a stubborn and costly fight against Hitler. Moscow has enough men to carry on the war indefinitely. But as more and more of its industrial areas fall under Nazi control, it is bound to encounter increasing diffi-

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culty in provisioning and equipping its troops. The eastern front can be maintained through next summer only if we provide aid on a tremendous scale. And as past experience with the lend-lease program so clearly shows, the necessary materials will not be forthcoming even next spring unless plans and appropriations are made within the next few weeks. For our own self-preservation we must somehow shake off the fatal habit of procrastination.

For a Free World

BY FREDA KIRCHWEY

ON JUNE 15 a group of men and women met in Washington. They represented sixteen countries, and among them were many leaders of democratic organizations and governments. They agreed at that meeting to found an association and launch a magazine, both to carry a name which today must also be a battle cry—"Free World." The new movement had one main object around which all its varied activities were to revolve. Its object was to draw together the tested elements of democratic resistance to fascism from every nation to form a concentration of experience and devotion, a dynamic center of energy, which would be directed to the double task of defeating Hitlerism and preparing the groundwork for a democratic peace.

That was three months ago. Today the Free World Association is organized and functioning, and the first issue of *Free World* is on the newsstands. For the first time émigrés from all the conquered countries have joined with political exiles from the fascist states and representatives of the democratic belligerents and with Americans of the whole hemisphere, north and south, to form a true "united front" against the threat of Nazi world dominion. This is a fact from which even the most dispirited and cynical must draw hope. Many of these persons bear on their bodies or in their minds the scars of fascist torture; many more have endured tests of fortitude and judgment that would have overwhelmed smaller natures. Here in this new league of democrats are some who will play a major role in constructing a more sturdy international society once Hitler's monstrous order has been abolished.

That they have united with American groups to carry on the struggle is itself an omen of the change that is due to come over this country. No matter what desperate Hitleresque maneuvers the isolationists may execute, it is clear that the United States is destined to be one of the last great battlefields in Hitler's world war against democracy. We may or may not be spared the full fury of bombing and shelling; we shall not avoid total participation. And in that struggle the services of the men and women who have brought from Europe and the Far East not only the experience of war itself, including the lessons of defeat, but a passionate understanding of what democracy means and a determination to fight until it is finally established will be worth whole panzer divisions in the battle for freedom.

In the three months of its existence the Free World Association has developed its activities in this country and extended them into Latin America and China. Associations have been started in Cuba, Mexico, Uruguay, Chile, Bolivia, Peru, Colombia. More than a hundred local committees in China, originally organized under the International Peace Campaign, have affiliated with the association and are carrying on vigorous work against appeasement. In Europe special envoys of the association have helped organize resistance against Nazi control in ways that cannot yet be told. The temporary director of the association, Clark Eichelberger, is now in London, where a branch has also been founded.

In this country the association has instituted regular short-wave broadcasts to Europe and Latin America, employing as speakers men and women who use the language of the nations addressed, whose names and records are known, and whose words bring encouragement and honest information. Besides this radio work—of first importance in the counter-offensive against Nazi lies and intimidation—the association is sending speakers to various American cities where local chapters are being formed.

But the journal, *Free World,* is the most striking achievement of the group so far. I know what the launching of a magazine involves, and I have been close enough to this one to appreciate the energy and courage that have gone into it. If I may draw on our own past for a comparison, *Free World* recalls most vividly the International Relations Section published as a supplement to *The Nation* in the tumultuous years following the last war. *Free World* seems to me to offer the same combination of high scholarship and fighting spirit that our late colleague, William MacDonald, established as the tone of that section. From the introductory drawing by Luis Quintinilla to the reports of Nazi terror and intrigue in the final pages, *Free World* has vitality, style, and concentrated purpose. Only a few of the articles have erudition without vigor. Most of them bring fresh analyses and constructive proposals to the problems of war and peace. The discussion of Vatican policy by Count Carlo Sforza is a provocative treatment of this much-debated subject. Henri Laugier's learned article on science and the war puts forward a most important idea for organizing a General Research Administration as part of the defense program. Other contributions I particularly like are Archibald MacLeish's song, The Western Sky; Walter Millis's candid discussion of American foreign policy; and the lively round-table conversation

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on the origins of World War II, led by J. Alvarez del Vayo. In this last, Pierre Cot, former French Minister of Air, reveals for the first time the intimate connection of Marshal Pétain and members of his staff with the plot against the government hatched by the Cagoulards.

If it is true, as I fully believe, that this war can only be won by a combination of political and military effort, the Free World movement should receive the fullest encouragement from all the people of this country who favor the defeat of Hitler. For the required mobilization of the democratic forces there could not have been a better beginning.

Making Defense Safe for Alcoa

BY I. F. STONE

I

Washington, September 19

LAST Monday the Truman committee, a Senate committee investigating the defense program, heard two witnesses. One was Jesse Jones. The other was Arthur H. Bunker, executive vice-president of the Lehman Corporation, now chief of the aluminum and magnesium section in the materials division of the OPM. Both were unwilling witnesses. The story drawn from them, painfully and piecemeal, was a sensational story and an important story, for it dealt with aluminum. Without enough aluminum we cannot make enough planes, and without enough planes we can neither help the British and the Russians to survive nor defend ourselves in the event of their defeat.

Some important stories are dull stories—full of statistics and complicated facts. "Pig iron" we used to call them. The story developed by the Truman committee hearing was hardly dull. The testimony showed that (1) Bunker, the dollar-a-year man in charge of aluminum and magnesium, is still drawing his $60,000-a-year salary from Lehman Corporation, which owns stock in the Aluminum Company of America and its sister corporation, Aluminum Ltd., of Canada; (2) after four months not a shovelful of dirt has been turned on the 600,000,000-pound aluminum expansion program announced by the OPM last May; (3) the first contract to be signed under that program obligates the government to spend $52,000,000 to finance new alumina and aluminum plants but leaves the Aluminum Company of America to build these plants when it chooses and to operate them as it pleases; (4) this one-sided contract was negotiated by Jesse Jones, who can be the country's most hard-boiled horse-trader in dealing with some small business man or municipality; (5) Jones signed the contract two days after the receipt of a letter from Secretary of the Interior Ickes protesting that the contract was unfair to the government and contrary to the public interest, and ought not to be signed; (6) Jones testified that the contract was written "in the first instance" by "Mr. Cliff Durr, our general counsel," but a moment later Durr was forced to admit that the first draft was written by Oscar Ewing, counsel for the Aluminum Company of America. I can add, as my own contribution to this story, that there was very little difference between the first draft of that contract and the last, and that Ewing is not only one of Alcoa's principal attorneys and local lobbyists but also vice-chairman of the Democratic National Committee. At this point the Truman committee pulled its punches.

I went over the contract between Alcoa and Jesse Jones last week-end and mentioned it in last week's letter because I was naive enough to think the press could hardly ignore the story and would squeeze all the juice out of it before a weekly could get around to covering it. I saw eight or nine newspapermen at the committee hearing on Monday, and I see a good many papers every day, but the only place I saw the story printed was in the Baltimore *Sun,* which ran a short Associated Press account. Until yesterday the only clipping the Truman committee had received on the hearing was from the Baltimore *Sun.* The Ewing angle is political dynamite, but the Republican *Herald Tribune* in New York charitably overlooked it. The New York *Times,* which is for all-out aid to Britain, seems to have failed to see the connection between aluminum and planes. It does not hate Hitler less; perhaps it merely loves Alcoa more. The Washington papers kept mum on the story, although the Washington *Post* on Monday ran a rewrite of an A. P. dispatch saying that Jones would be put on the griddle by the Truman committee.

I think the silence of the press on the matter is as shocking as the inactivity of the OPM. Together they present Mussolini with a fine example of what he calls a "pluto-democracy." They show how little the real controls of the defense program have been changed behind all the recent scene-shifting and shake-ups. This is the kind of thing that rots empires and prepares defeats, and it is time that Mr. Roosevelt woke up to what is going on in his own defense household instead of continuing the grandiose farce by which a Stettinius—more responsible than any other man for the delay in expand-

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ing aluminum production—is placed in charge of "speeding up" the lend-lease program!

The darkest aspect of this aluminum story is its one bright spot. When William L. Batt appeared before the Truman committee last May 12, he was able to show by some strenuous arithmetic that the present production of aluminum plus the expansion planned would be just enough by the spring of 1942 to take care of our "direct" military needs. The new bomber programs—which remain headline hashish without aluminum—have since increased those "direct" military needs for the light metal. Four months have been lost, and the only contract signed covers but half the expansion planned. The new aluminum-producing facilities will not be ready by next spring. I learned from Truman committee investigators, however, that the consequences will not be as serious as might have been expected because the lag in aircraft production is greater than the lag in aluminum production. Aircraft production is now expected to hit its full stride by December of 1942 instead of next spring, and aluminum planning is in terms of the winter and spring of 1942-43.

Judging from the testimony last Monday and the contract, what we have to begin worrying about now is whether present expansion plans will materialize in time to take care of expanded plane production in the winter and spring of 1942-43. Unless Alcoa's grip on the OPM and the RFC is loosened, I do not think we will get that aluminum in time. The contract with Alcoa provides for four new plants. One is for alumina, the intermediate product from which aluminum is made. This plant, to be erected in Arkansas, will supply 400,000,000 pounds of alumina a year, or enough to make only an additional 200,000,000 pounds of aluminum. The three other plants are aluminum plants, one with a capacity of 150,000,000 pounds a year, to be built near Massena, New York; the second, with 90,000,000 pounds' capacity, to be constructed "adjacent to deep water" in Washington or Oregon; the third, with a capacity of 100,000,000 pounds, to be set up in Arkansas. That is a total of 340,000,000 pounds of aluminum. No contracts have yet been signed for the rest of the 600,000,000-pound expansion promised in May, or for the additional alumina required to produce the aluminum, or for the additional fabricating facilities necessary. Aluminum ingots don't fly.

The contract is full of loopholes that lawyers will appreciate. No time is fixed for completion of the plants, and there is, of course, no penalty clause. Alcoa merely agrees to "use its best endeavors" to obtain the land necessary for construction of the plants, and it is doubtful whether the sites have yet been picked. The best Jones could say was, "I think the site at Massena, New York, has been picked. I am not certain about Arkansas. I think the site for the Northwest plant has been picked." Alcoa agrees to prepare plans, and if the plans are approved by the government, to complete the work "as soon as practicable." Jones said it was his recollection that Alcoa thought it would have the plants ready in less than a year's time. When Hugh Fulton, counsel to the committee, asked him why that wasn't put into the contract with a penalty clause attached, Jones said, "I can't tell you." Jones's testimony is a lexicographer's nightmare. At one point he interpreted the word "shall" in the contract as meaning "maybe," and at another he said "or" meant the same as "both." In the construction of the plants Alcoa is not obligated to exercise "good faith and reasonable care," the usual formula, but "good faith or that degree of care which they normally exercise in the conduct of Alcoa's business." The non-lawyer reader may take my word for it that the second clause would make proof of negligence, much less bad faith, very difficult. Fulton wanted to know why the term "reasonable care" wasn't used instead and why the contract said "or" instead of "and." I quote from the record:

Jones: . . . I don't agree with you that "or" means one or the other. "Or" means both.

Fulton: "Or" means "both"?

Jones: Certainly. . . .

Aluminum is made from alumina and alumina from bauxite. Ninety per cent of the country's high-grade bauxite, the only kind being used, is controlled by Alcoa. After the bauxite is purchased, on Alcoa's terms, the government will still have to ask Alcoa's permission to make alumina from it in the government's own alumina plant. The contract says, "When the alumina plant is completed, production of alumina therein shall be at such rates within its capacity and for such periods as shall be agreed upon from time to time by Defense [Plant] Corporation and Alcoa." Fulton asked Jones, "Suppose Alcoa tells you it doesn't agree that that plant should be operated, even though you have a good many millions of government money in it? I don't quite see under this contract, how you could require it to be operated."

Jones: I suspect you could if you were to try.

Fulton: Under what provision of the contract?

Jones: You could do it without a contract. . . .

Fulton: Why sign a contract where they have a right such as that, Mr. Jones, when you have no right to control and operate the plant? Why not insert a provision authorizing you to operate the plant if they don't want to?

Jones: I think we are fully protected. . . .

Under the contract, after Alcoa has permitted alumina to be produced in the government plant, the government cannot use its own alumina to make aluminum in its own aluminum plants except at a price satisfactory to Alcoa. If any alumina is left over, which could be made available to other manufacturers of aluminum, it cannot

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be sold except on terms satisfactory to Alcoa. Alcoa gets a five-year lease on the aluminum plants. The lease begins either seven years from the execution of the contract or whenever production reaches 80 per cent of capacity, whichever is earlier. This allows two years for construction of the plants. Once they are in operation, production in the government-owned plants is to be at the same rate as in Alcoa's plants, and under the contract the government cannot cancel the lease unless production is restricted to less than 40 per cent of capacity. I am going to tell some more about this extraordinary contract and its equally extraordinary companion contracts with the Canadian aluminum company next week. In the meantime I wish some Senator would have the courage to ask Jesse Jones whether this contract was written to defend the United States or the Aluminum Company of America.

Bad Neighbor Vargas

BY PAULO DUARTE

SELDOM does a day go by without leading newspapers in the United States publishing long articles on the political situation in Brazil. The strange thing about it is that these articles, with rare exceptions, describe a Brazil which is absolutely unknown to Brazilians and to others who are well acquainted with that important South American nation. The praise given to the dictator and his regime and the view of Brazilian politics indicate that the source of information can be only the government's own propaganda office, prodigally maintained for the purpose of preventing other countries from learning the truth about Brazil during this time of crisis for America and the world.

Thus Getulio Vargas is often described as very different from the dictators of other enslaved countries. He is said to be a magnanimous person, loved by the people; or it is asserted that there is no real dictatorship in Brazil, the proof being that the head of the state is called a "president"; or the existence of political persecution in Brazil is denied. One journalist recently affirmed that the Brazilian dictator is affectionately nicknamed "Ge-Ge"; another wrote that the people call him "Dad Getulio"; a third went so far as to say that only a negligible minority is against Brazil's dictator. Some of these articles carry the signatures of famous writers who visited Brazil without the time or means necessary to acquire a knowledge of the country's situation and were quite obviously enveloped and submerged in the tendencious publicity of the dictatorship. As a consequence they brought home and published impressions of the country completely different from reality.

HOW VARGAS BECAME DICTATOR

Let us examine the facts. Toward the end of 1937 Brazilians were getting ready for the presidential elections. The *União Democratica Brasileira* (Brazilian Democratic Union) presented as its candidate Armando de Salles Oliveira, ex-governor of São Paulo, a name well known in Brazil and in the United States as well. But Getulio Vargas did not wish to leave the presidency. In defiance of the wishes of the whole nation, Vargas allied himself with the Integralistas, popularly known as "Greenshirts," in order to make a coup d'état and prevent the presidential election from taking place. The support of the army was essential. To obtain it Vargas plotted with several generals of clearly totalitarian and pro-German tendencies to set up in Brazil a government similar to that of Germany. But an excuse to silence the voice of the Parliament was lacking; this could be done constitutionally only through the declaration of martial law. In order to create the necessary "emergency," Vargas persuaded the army's Chief of Staff, General Goes Monteiro, and his Ministers of War and of the Navy to announce to Parliament that the government was threatened by an imminent Communist uprising, which could be prevented only if full powers were given to the executive. These men also stated that the details of the plot could not safely be disclosed either to the Chamber of Deputies or to the Senate. Confronted with such high guaranties, Parliament voted to put the country under martial law as requested.

Once in possession of the necessary powers, Getulio Vargas, on November 10, 1937, promptly dissolved the federal Parliament and the state legislative assemblies. Then he promulgated a new constitution creating a totalitarian regime. Having established his absolute control through this fraud, Getulio Vargas abandoned his supporters, the Greenshirts, and as promptly began to do away with his most dangerous enemies, the Democrats, who represented then as now the mass of the Brazilian people. To accomplish such a goal a Gestapo hardly less efficient than its Nazi model was instituted in Rio de Janeiro. The prisons were filled, and even today thousands of men whose crime for the most part was that of desiring a free country are held in the prisons of Rio de Janeiro and the states and on the inhospitable island of Fernando de Noronha. Many have died from the cruelty of the Rio police, others are crippled, and still others, as

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the result of the tortures to which they were subjected, have lost their minds.

A "Tribunal of Safety" was created to pass judgment in political cases. This summary court, manned by personal friends of the dictator, has condemned to prison some of the most distinguished members of the opposition. It has also brought false charges against respectable officers of the army, persons of blameless reputation who have rendered notable services to the nation. In the case of certain leaders, however, neither the police nor the tribunal was able to contrive plausible charges and proofs. Hence it was decided to drive them out of the country. This the police accomplished by arresting, freeing, and rearresting these men, until in despair they went into exile.

Meanwhile other assaults on civil rights continued. One of the most important mediums of democratic opinion is published in the city of São Paulo. Always a strong democratic newspaper, *O Estado de São Paulo*, even after the coup d'état of 1937, remained loyal to its tradition of freedom. Since the censorship of the press forbade any manifestation against the dictatorship, the journal adopted an absolutely neutral attitude; if it could not express its opinion, it at least refrained from any praise of the regime. But the dictatorship needed *O Estado de São Paulo*. Unable to bend it to his uses through peaceful means, Getulio Vargas used his most efficient weapon, violence. He first exiled the director of the paper, Dr. Julio de Mesquita Filho, who ever since has lived in Argentina. Then, since even this was not sufficient to force *O Estado de São Paulo* into line, the newspaper was seized by the police in March, 1940, a little more than a year after its director had been expelled from the country. Its proprietors in turn were driven from their homes, and the dictator appointed as manager a personal friend who ever since has given the paper a totalitarian bias. The owners have never received any compensation for their property. Indeed, there was no legal procedure in the process of expropriation. The owners were simply thrown out, and their great newspaper was handed over to the agents of the dictator.

PRO-NAZI FOREIGN POLICY

Brazil's foreign policy has two faces, and it is this duplicity which has misled public opinion in the United States. There is a policy of "collaboration" and of inter-American solidarity designed to keep us happy, and there is the *real* policy of playing the Nazi game. The first policy is forwarded by the charming smiles of Foreign Minister Oswaldo Aranha, formerly a popular ambassador in Washington, a capable and attractive personality whose political ambitions have submerged his democratic inclinations. But even the formal pretenses of good neighborliness are not always observed. Negotiations about the only base (Natal) made available to the United States for the purposes of hemisphere defense were protracted and difficult. And now the Brazilian government has very much reduced the value of its concession by appointing to Natal and the surrounding military district a number of officers particularly notorious for their Nazi sympathies. Among them is a close relative of the pro-Nazi Chief of Staff, General Goes Monteiro.

In Brazil, Hitler did not have to organize a fifth column; he found one made to order in the government itself. A short time ago the military seized the offices of the Rio newspaper *O Diario Carioca* because it had published news concerning the political and military activities of Brazilian Nazis. General Goes Monteiro summoned to his office representatives of several of the other newspapers and told them that if they wished to continue publication it would be necessary for them to change their attitude and stop showing sympathy for Britain, as they did at every opportunity. More recently, on an official occasion with many diplomats present, General Goes Monteiro reprimanded a Brazilian journalist for supporting England and told him in effect that he had better change his views since anyone who was not on Germany's side was a traitor to Brazil. This incident was witnessed by the diplomats and others present, for the General was angered by the journalist's words and both raised their voices. About three months later two Brazilian ships were attacked by a Nazi plane in the Mediterranean; several members of the crew were killed and many were injured. Not until two weeks afterward were the newspapers authorized to give out a part of the story, without any mention of Germany.

A Brazilian mission whose members were high officers and civilians notoriously sympathetic to Germany, represented Brazil at the recent commemorative ceremonies in Portugal. The head of the mission, a general, went on from Portugal to Spain especially to offer a sword to General Franco in the name of Brazil. Two members of the mission, a major and a civilian, both well-known pro-Nazis (the civilian is one of the leaders of the Greenshirts), were, on invitation of the German government, entertained in Germany and in some of the occupied countries, where they were shown the effects of the invincible Nazi power. The major, who today holds a high position in the War Department, on his return to Brazil published a series of articles describing his trip in terms of undisguised admiration for the Nazis. Ironically, these articles appeared in *O Estado de São Paulo*.

Brazil's Department of Propaganda exercises a complete censorship over all newspapers, motion pictures, and radio broadcasts in order that nothing may be said or published which is unfavorable either to the Vargas regime or to Nazism. It has even gone so far as to fail to rebroadcast President Roosevelt's speeches, brazenly stating after the event that transcriptions had not been made in Brazil because the announcement of the speech

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had not arrived in time. The department lacks even the elementary common sense to conceal this attitude, which is opposed not only to the popular feeling of the country but to the pretended policy of the government. Last year it sent to the motion-picture producers of the United States a circular of which the first two paragraphs follow:

> 1. Stop the exhibition of pictures dealing with the present war when these touch disparagingly, however lightly, upon any of the nations at war, because Brazil wishes to maintain its neutrality and avoid the resentment of this or that country.
>
> 2. Stop the showing of films favorable to liberal democracy, because Brazil, having a strong government, cannot permit propaganda against the regime. The word "democracy" to be cut from pictures, even when used alone.

Various other events reveal the true attitude toward the Axis of the Vargas dictatorship. Several court actions have recently been instituted in Brazil against Axis ships, mostly Italian, which remained in port because of the British blockade. The complaints were lodged by Brazilian creditors. The first step taken by the dictatorship was to assume responsibility for the debts incurred by the shipowners. Then, extending its protection even farther, it published the following decree dated April 10, 1941:

> Article I. Credits, obligations, and contracts involving subjects of belligerent countries living in Brazil cannot be subjected to legal action for the duration of the war.
>
> Article II. All laws to the contrary are hereby revoked.

Lately the Nazi problem in Brazil has taken on an even more alarming aspect. Certain military leaders believe that Nazi penetration is now so far advanced that it will be impossible to check it from Rio de Janiero to the southern border. The Japanese fifth column works side by side with the German-Brazilians and with the Greenshirts, which are once more in the good graces of the government. All of them operate under the direct supervision of Nazi leaders, one of whom is a general attached to the German embassy who was recently expelled from Argentina. The Greenshirts regularly hold their meetings in the German embassy.

Recently, during the official celebrations in honor of Santos Dumont, in the presence of the Minister of War and representatives of the Chief of Staff and the Department of Press and Propaganda, the army officers who were the principal speakers openly attacked the United States, asserting that the time had come for Brazil to "cast off the American yoke." Leaflets were distributed among the crowd violently attacking both the United States and Great Britain. The São Paulo censorship recently permitted an Italian paper to print a scurrilous criticism of Mrs. Roosevelt. On the next day students of the University of São Paulo set fire to the building in which the paper was published. This is an eloquent proof of the gap which now separates the people and the government of Brazil.

FRAUDULENT FINANCE

One of the chief points of Vargas's propaganda abroad, a point which has been particularly stressed lately, is the economic and financial stability of his administration. The dictator is supposed to have executed a notable financial program, among the advantageous results of which is a vast decrease in Brazil's external debt. Nobody, apparently, has thought of examining the manner in which the debt was reduced. I shall try to sum it up here.

After the "funding" operations of 1898 the Brazilian government paid punctually both interest and amortization on the external federal debt. In 1931 Vargas decided to suspend payments; for three years he gave only scrip to the creditors. It was by this method that the debt was reduced the first time. In 1934 Sir Otto Niemeyer, representing British creditors, developed a plan to satisfy the holders of Brazilian bonds. This plan, called an "agreement" although it was imposed by Vargas upon the creditors, was in force from March, 1934, to March, 1938. Under it the value of the "coupons" of the Brazilian debt was compulsorily reduced. This was the second method used for reducing the debt. Not satisfied with this, Vargas in 1937 again decreed suspension of all payments, and thus for the third time the debt was reduced. In 1939, in order to obtain new foreign credits, the dictator restored interest payments but only to the extent of one-third of the value of the "coupons" that had been compulsorily lowered a few years before. Thus the debt was reduced for the fourth time, and the agreement previously imposed completely disregarded. Financial manipulations of such a fantastic nature may seem scarcely credible. Skeptics, however, may easily confirm this abbreviated record by turning to the financial notices published periodically in the North American press. The simple fact is that the dictator of Brazil reduced his country's debt by swindling its creditors. This is the secret of his much-advertised financial wisdom.

There exists in Brazil an institution created by President Vargas called the National Department of Coffee, which under the pretext of aiding the coffee producers has actually exploited them for more than ten years, levying export duties which are exclusively used for political purposes. The sum collected by this department amounts to many millions, and there is no record of the uses to which it has been put. The department's balance sheet has never been published. But this is not all. For many years the department has been burning a large part of the coffee produced in order to overcome overproduction and obtain better prices. Putting aside questions as

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to the economic value of this procedure, which has chiefly served to benefit foreign competitors, the most serious aspect of the system is the government's illegal and dishonest behavior. Of the coffee turned in by the producers for burning, the department "embezzles" a large proportion, which it sells clandestinely in defiance of the provisions of the federal law; it then employs the millions thus obtained for purposes of propaganda, bribery, and repressive police measures. The National Department of Coffee in Rio de Janeiro constitutes one of the greatest financial scandals of South America.

Another point is worth mentioning. The Vargas government has taken as its model the monetary system of the totalitarian countries and officially adopted two exchange rates—the official and the so-called "free" rate. The government receives millions of dollars in export duties at the official rate and then sells a large part of this foreign currency at the "free" rate, with a profit of nearly 20 per cent.

Thus it will be seen that the glowing reports of casual journalistic visitors to Brazil must be discounted. Vargas is a despot hardly less hated than the despots in Europe with whom he is secretly allied. Those Brazilians who call him "Ge-Ge" do so not in affection but with the purpose of ridiculing him; popular carnival songs in which references to "Ge-Ge" appeared were prohibited by the censor. Vargas's adversaries are the people of Brazil. During his period of dictatorship he has had to face five revolutions, and he has remained in power only by methods of military and police control comparable with those applied by the Nazi and Fascist dictators, whom he openly admires and privately supports.

Budapest's Fake Mission

BY IGNAC SCHULTZ

A COMFORTABLE suite in the Hotel Marguery in New York City is the present headquarters of a Hungarian member of Parliament, Tibor de Eckhardt, whose mission in this country deserves more publicity than it has hitherto received. For his job is to arrange insurance against an Axis defeat for the feudal coterie which rules Hungary by the grace of Hitler.

The Budapest government has for a long time been playing the jackal to the German tiger and has been rewarded by choice morsels from the tiger's kills—portions of Czecho-Slovakia, Rumania, and Yugoslavia. But it is by no means confident that Germany will finally win the war, and it wishes to arrange matters so that, if the tiger is destroyed, the jackal will not be forced to disgorge its gains. Meanwhile, of course, it proposes to go on serving the tiger, who after all may still prove the victor.

Mr. de Eckhardt reached this country by a roundabout route through Athens, Egypt, and South Africa. Officially he was not sent by the Hungarian government; he was merely given a passport and a permit to leave the country—precious papers not obtainable by persons who have incurred the disapproval of the authorities. Moreover, in all Nazi-dominated countries these matters are subject to the control of the Gestapo, which surely would have vetoed Mr. Eckhardt's exit visa had it regarded either him or his mission as opposed to German interests.

Yet in America Mr. de Eckhardt poses as an anti-Nazi and explains his objective as the formation of a united front of all people of Hungarian nationality or origin to rally support for an independent and democratic Hungary. In this connection he is endeavoring to obtain the blessing of influential Americans, as well as the support of the leading Hungarian organizations in this country. According to the *Amerikai Magyar Nepszava,* a New York Hungarian-language daily which gives rather cautious support to the Budapest regime, he is being received in high American political and diplomatic circles. And it is known that he has twice conferred with Under Secretary of State Sumner Welles.

If Admiral Horthy's government is really restive under the Nazi yoke, as is sometimes asserted by poorly informed Magyarphiles, and wishes to make connections with the democratic countries, why did it choose this particular emissary? Let us examine Tibor de Eckhardt's claims to represent democratic opinion in Hungary in the light of his record. When still a very young man he became a leader of the "Awakening Magyars" and the "Race Defenders"—secret societies directly responsible for the white terror which ravaged Hungary after the collapse of Bela Kun's short-lived Bolshevik revolution. They were not merely anti-Communist but anti-Semitic, anti-democratic, and fiercely chauvinistic. They were responsible for the murder of thousands, for the imprisonment of tens of thousands, of men and women. Their methods of terror and torture provided a model for the later activities of Mussolini's Blackshirts and Hitler's storm troopers.

It ought not to be forgotten that Hungary was the first fascist state in Europe. Some time before the March on Rome, years before the Reichstag fire, gentlemen like Tibor de Eckhardt were infecting Hungary with a disease

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destined to wreck the weakened constitutions of a dozen European states. Eckhardt and his associates have never expressed any remorse for their part in the birth of fascism.

After the white terror a new oligarchy was established in Hungary, half feudal, half fascist. As a reward for his services Eckhardt, who is related to the family of Admiral Horthy, was appointed chief of the press department of the Foreign Office. Later he performed similar functions in the Prime Minister's office. Some of his activities during this period went far outside the boundaries of legitimate propaganda. The Prague press accused him of organizing armed bands in Slovakia with a view to undermining the stability of the new Czechoslovak state. It has also been alleged that he organized the manufacture and distribution of counterfeit Czechoslovak currency. This charge has not been proved, but the counterfeiting became public when one of his woman friends was arrested with the goods on her.

Eckhardt resigned his government post because he was denied cabinet office. He took refuge in domestic politics, gaining control of the *Kisgazda,* or Small Farmers' Party, which up to then had exercised a conservative but moderating influence in the Hungarian Parliament. In his hands this became another counterfeit, for while it continued to appear before the world as a peasant organization, it in fact represented the interests of the middle-sized estates and proved subservient to whatever ministry was in office. Actually a real peasant party cannot be formed in Hungary because the landless laborers who form half the population have only a theoretical right to vote.

There are differences between Eckhardt's Kisgazda Party and the great landlords who hold supreme power in Hungary, but they agree about the necessity of holding down the rural proletariat and maintaining the supply of cheap labor. In some respects the owners of the smaller estates are even more reactionary than the great feudal lords, who are often less narrow intellectually and less nationalistic in outlook. For instance, Tibor de Eckhardt, an anti-Nazi in New York, voted enthusiastically in the Hungarian Chamber of Deputies for the new anti-Semitic laws which have been drawn up on the Nürnberg model. It was the aristocratic members of the upper house, many of whom have intermarried with Jewish families, who opposed this legislation.

In 1934 Eckhardt reappeared in the fields of diplomacy when he went to Geneva to represent Hungary at the League of Nations. The Budapest government was at that time in a tight spot. On October 9, 1934, King Alexander of Yugoslavia and the French Foreign Minister, Barthou, had been assassinated in Marseilles by Croat gangsters. Hungary, Italy, and Germany were all involved. The guns and bombs used for the murders came from Germany and Italy, the assassins had been trained in Italy and Hungary, and it was from the Hungarian city of Nagy Kanisza that they set out on their mission provided with regular Hungarian passports issued to false names by the Budapest state police. Not long before, King Alexander had been openly condemned to death in the pages of the official organ of the Croat terrorists, a paper published in Berlin and edited by one Gerhardt Rather, who also held an important position in the office of Alfred Rosenberg, the philosopher and "foreign minister" of the Nazi Party.

Tibor de Eckhardt

Eckhardt did a good job at Geneva in covering up the responsibility of the Hungarian government. He was openly supported by the Italians and secretly by Laval, then Premier of France and already the recipient of personal favors from Mussolini. Yugoslavia was unable to obtain satisfaction, and fascism proved triumphantly that it could get away with international as well as domestic murder. It was a landmark on the road to Munich and the invasion of Poland.

Since that day Tibor de Eckhardt has been a consistent proponent of Nazi policies in his own country. But Budapest is a long way off, and the American public is not well informed about Hungarian politics. This has encouraged him to come here, posing as a democrat and anti-fascist, seeking to put out an anchor to windward for himself and the Hungarian reactionaries whom he represents. If he is able to rope in the Magyar societies in America and to sell himself to the State Department as a liberal patriot representing all the opposition elements in Hungary, then should America enter the war he might be able to get recognition as head of a government in exile and obtain control of the frozen Hungarian funds in this country. In any case he would have put himself in a favorable position for a place at the eventual peace conference, where he could plead that Hungary had been a victim of *force majeure* and attempt to save its governing class from suffering their just deserts.

But surely America will not fall for this confidence trick; surely it will not betray the oppressed and struggling democrats of Hungary, who have their genuine representatives in America. Mr. de Eckhardt should be recognized for what he is—a fascist agent. Serious negotiations with him would be a "stab in the back" for all those who look westward for deliverance.

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Wooden Nutmeg of Socialism

BY WILL CHASAN

AMERICAN politics exhibits few paradoxes stranger than that of Bridgeport's Socialist mayor, Jasper McLevy, whose most influential supporters are to be found in the local Manufacturers' Association and Chamber of Commerce. Bridgeport business men have not, of course, been converted to Marxism. The conversion has occurred on the other side, with the result that Bridgeport has enjoyed the unique distinction of being governed by a Republican administration under a Socialist emblem. "A sheep's administration in wolf's clothing," one Bridgeport labor man calls it.

Mayor McLevy

Little in McLevy's record refutes this characterization. A prudent, homespun politician with a slightly Lincolnesque appearance and a passion for office, the Mayor continues to assert that he is a Socialist, but his socialism seems of a piece with the wooden nutmegs of Yankee folklore. His program for municipal ownership of public utilities was shelved soon after he took office in 1933. Appropriations for an attempt to lower utility rates have been left unspent. Labor has received a few crumbs in the back room, but even the most bellicose employers have found no occasion to grumble. The leit-motif of McLevy's policy has been economy and a low tax rate, to the evident satisfaction of Bridgeport business men, some of whom talk slyly about his "Scotch thrift" and are amused at the idea of an economy government headed by a Socialist mayor.

He has provided what the men in the club cars like to call a "sound business administration." It has been honest, moderately efficient, with no social frills. His most notable achievements during eight years of office have been the introduction of civil service and a central purchasing agency, both of which have been under attack for irregularities; a $3,000,000 reduction in bonded indebtedness; and the construction, with the aid of $16,000,000 in federal grants, of several parks and a certain number of miles of roads and sewers. There has been no important enlargement of social services. Nor have municipal employees been unduly pampered. A strike of garbage and ash removers was unceremoniously broken, and an attempt to establish a $1,000 yearly minimum for civil-service workers was rebuffed. All this, of course, is in the best tradition of "soundness."

McLevy's pursuit of economy has led him into acts at which a Socialist, or even the mildest liberal, would be expected to balk. He opposed a $6,500,000 low-cost federal housing project on the ground that, being tax exempt, it would mean forfeiting $25,000 in yearly tax income. Other reasons given for his opposition were equally incongruous from a Socialist. At a public hearing one of his lieutenants quoted Hamilton Fish approvingly to the effect that federal housing was "a humbug and a fraud." Another denounced the hearing itself because it was "packed" by housing advocates. A spirited fight led by two young newspapermen finally aroused so much sentiment for the project that McLevy reversed his stand. He now claims credit for Bridgeport's housing developments, although he still is hostile to the idea.

This hostility caused him to obstruct defense housing projects and is partly responsible for the acute housing shortage which has developed in Bridgeport since the influx of more than 25,000 defense workers. McLevy's contention that the defense projects now going up over his opposition will overhouse Bridgeport is unconvincing to anyone who has seen the city's slums. It also ignores the reports of Harold Poole, his own housing administrator, who admitted last June that "from fifty to seventy-five freshly evicted tenants a day [were] looking for low-cost apartments, because landlords have boosted rates beyond their power to pay." Although rent speculators were having a field day, McLevy did nothing until August 7, when mounting criticism and pressure from federal authorities induced him to appoint a fair-rent board. However, the evictions continue. On the day the rent board was appointed, McLevy's right-hand man, Fred Schwarzkopf, discussing the housing issue with me, said indignantly, "We don't want the federal government in here squandering the public money."

McLevy's attitude toward the defense program as a whole is worth recording. He has no enthusiasm for Roosevelt's foreign policy, probably because of isolationist sentiment among Republican business men and in the city's powerful Catholic church, to which he has consistently deferred. In addition he is a firm believer in business-as-usual, and the need to produce guns for

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the democracies apparently is overshadowed in his mind by the increase it will require in the Bridgeport budget. This is McLevy's main concern. He will have to expand Bridgeport's fire and police services, build additional schools, and raise other appropriations, all of which he is loath to do. One has the feeling that he would rather reverse our foreign policy than add a mill to the city tax rate.

The Bridgeport *Herald,* a liberal newspaper with an engaging irreverence for politicians, frequently refers to the Mayor's fondness for "rubber stamps." Socialist and other city officials unsympathetic to his economy-first regime have been swiftly purged from the party and administration, both of which he dominates completely. McLevy has placed most jobs under civil service, but enough remain for his political needs, and the prospect of receiving one of the more desirable municipal posts has usually proved effective in discouraging potential oppositionists. Members of the Common Council, on which the Socialists have a fifteen-to-one majority, rarely dissent from the Mayor's wishes. The case of School Superintendent Worcester Warren, a well-regarded progressive educator who was recently dismissed for opposing McLevy's efforts to run the School Board, is a good example of how the administration operates.

There is a story that when McLevy was first elected some Republican clubs removed signs reading, "Republican Club, Pinochle Tuesdays and Thursdays," and substituted, "Socialist Club, Pinochle Tuesdays and Thursdays." The Bridgeport Socialist Party contains between four and five hundred members, a great many of them ex-Republicans. Purges and conscientious scruples have taken most of the pre-1933 members out of the party; those that remain are mostly McLevy's old cronies now holding municipal offices. The Norman Thomas branch of the Socialist Party broke with the Bridgeport mayor in 1936, and the rightist Social Democratic Federation, of which ostensibly he is national chairman, has no use for him either. The S. D. F., strongly New Deal, was embarrassed last year by his refusal to support Roosevelt, and is in the anomalous position of having a national chairman who not only disagrees with it on major policy but is not legally a member, since the Socialist Party of Connecticut has never become affiliated with it.

The Mayor occupies an interesting position in Republican strategy. In 1934 he prevented the Democrats from gaining control of the state legislature by electing Socialist representatives from Bridgeport. In 1938, as a gubernatorial candidate, he corralled enough normally Democratic working-class votes to defeat the New Deal Governor, Wilbur Cross, and enable the Republicans to capture the State House and a number of Congressional seats. Close observers of the campaign say that McLevy and the Republican gubernatorial candidate concentrated their fire on the Democratic Party and dealt gently with each other. In local politics the Mayor is supported by important Republican elements who approve of his administration, and who realize that knifing him in favor of the Republican ticket might result in a Democratic victory. The fact that McLevy is a help in state politics and neutral in national politics enables them to support him without tangling their lines.

In a sense the Mayor owes his Republican support and his office to the attitude of Bridgeport labor groups, which have rarely been aggressive enough to demand more than he could grant without antagonizing his conservative allies. He has never become involved in a serious industrial dispute in which his action might bring down on him the hostility of one side or the other. He is on friendly terms with most A. F. of L. officials, having done them discreet favors and appointed a number of them to municipal jobs and commissions. The reply of one of these to my question, "What has McLevy done for the unions?" was, "Why, nothing much, but then Socialists aren't interested in unions. They're politicians." Several A. F. of L. leaders, under Democratic influence, oppose McLevy, but they are in the minority. A more substantial threat to his political future is offered by the C. I. O., which is hostile because of a succession of minor disputes and a pronounced difference in temperament. The attitude of rank-and-file workers ranges from enthusiasm to dislike, with a broad area of apathy in between. For some, the Mayor's habit of driving an old car, going around in shirt sleeves, and inviting people to call him Jasper has an undeniable appeal. Those who have suffered from the raw edges of the defense boom—from evictions, for instance—are less affected by his shirt sleeves, which according to a Democratic critic are all that remains of his proletarian philosophy. The strains of the boom may eventually create enough discontent to alienate the bulk of Bridgeport labor and drive McLevy from office.

Such a development is dimly discernible in a proposed alliance of anti-McLevy A. F. of L. unionists, the C. I. O., and the Democratic Party in the coming elections. It is unlikely, however, that any combination formed at this late stage can defeat the Mayor's bid for a fifth term, especially since the Democrats are badly split over the question of leadership. Some Bridgeport politicians believe that the alliance augurs his decline, but few concede it more than an outside chance of victory this year. The Republican organization is conceded no chance at all for the reasons already mentioned, and may even fail to find a sacrificial lamb to accept its nomination. The city apparently is prepared to endure another siege of McLevy's socialism with the same fine patience it has displayed through decades of rule by Democrats and avowed Republicans. The only people upset by the prospect, aside from the Democrats, are those who had expected that a Socialist mayor would at least act like a liberal.

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In the Wind

WHEN HE ADDRESSES the Fight for Freedom rally in Madison Square Garden on October 5, Wendell Willkie will tell all that he knows of the origins and purposes of the Wheeler-Nye-Clark motion-picture investigation.

RECENT CRITICISM of the Polish government-in-exile for harboring pro-fascists and anti-Semites has had some good effect. Not long ago General Duch, chief of the Polish Legion in Canada, was asked to attend a function in Detroit that had been organized by outspoken reactionaries. The General refused and addressed an open letter to the Polish press expressing his dislike of anti-Semitism.

THE WAR DEPARTMENT is circulating an article by Penn Kimball of *PM* praising Major Walter Griffin, author of the pamphlet dealing with an imaginary war between "Almat and Kotmk." An accompanying release says that Major Griffin intended no analogy between "Kotmk" and Germany.

CAPTAIN GEORGE SMITH, who was arrested in New York last week for rioting, has never been, as he claimed, ex-Colonel Lindbergh's bodyguard. He was, however, Father Coughlin's bodyguard and has recently been employed as chief bouncer at the New York office of America First.

FROM A GERMAN BROADCAST of September 27, 1940: "Satisfaction is felt in Oslo now that a stable order has been created."

MARTIN DIES may soon announce that he no longer supports the Administration's foreign policy. The defection is said to be due to Russia's entry into the war.

A NEW YORK NEWSPAPERMAN has discovered an article written by Gerald P. Nye during the last war in which Nye urged that the older La Follette be ousted from the Senate for his opposition to American intervention.

THE NEWS LETTER *France Speaks* reports that just before Pierre Laval was wounded by Paul Collette he was trying to make capital of his former Socialist connections. Agents of Laval visited several trade-union leaders in unoccupied France and informed them that a fight was going on between Laval and Darlan. Laval, they said, was secretly opposed to collaboration. They urged that the patriotic labor leaders join forces with Laval, who would lead them in a fight against the Nazis. According to the report, all who were questioned flatly rejected the proposition, sensing that it was a trick to aid Laval in his fight to return to power.

[*We invite our readers to submit material for In the Wind —either clippings with source and date or stories that can be clearly authenticated. A prize of $5 will be awarded each month for the best item.*—EDITORS THE NATION.]

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A Native at Large

BY JONATHAN DANIELS

Prison Horrors in America

THIS man, Raymond Farris, threw down his chain-gang hammer in the quarry near Roanoke, Virginia, and with another convict started running. Guards brought the other man down. They put buckshot in Farris's back. He headed north and made 200 miles at a remarkable rate, apparently entering Pennsylvania by the village of New Freedom. Less than a week after he escaped he was in jail at York on a charge of drunkenness, a condition which, he said, he had reached by drinking the rubbing alcohol he had bought to put on his gunshot wounds. Jailers used a hacksaw to take a steel ring off his leg. He talked about prison conditions in Virginia. They did not sound pretty. The jail doctor took the shot out of his back. The Reverend Docham Harris of York, county probation officer, said he was going to use whatever influence he had to prevent Virginia from getting Farris again. A local lawyer volunteered in the cause and petitioned the Governor not to let Virginia get Farris back. The *Gazette and Daily* of York took up the convict's cause. And York is confident that it has a man as worthy of its defense as the gentleman who wrote "I Am a Fugitive from a Georgia Chain Gang" nearly ten years ago.

Perhaps it has. Certainly recent disclosures as to the lashings and sweat boxes for convicts in Georgia's county camps do not indicate that as much progress has been made as might have been in that decade. This man Farris, a small-time forger and drunk who blames his collapse into crime on his divorce from his wife, may be telling the absolute truth about the quarry camp in Virginia. There, he says, the men are chained in bunks above their own excreta, and there even a man who works so hard among the stones that he ruptures himself may be strung up with his hands above him for hours at a time for not working hard enough. It may be so. I don't know. Some convicts have told me the absolute truth; others have told me some big and fancy lies.

Truth about prisons comes out only in storms of sudden, showy scandal. But it is apt to come out anywhere. There was the dreadful case a few years ago in York's Pennsylvania of prisoners who were cooked to death with steam as a result of an ingenious enterprise in prison discipline. York is still aware of that. A writer in the *Gazette and Daily* said, "Goodness knows we have had too many recent occasions of brutality in Pennsylvania's prisons and institutions for the feeble-minded." In condemned Virginia the warden of the state penitentiary at Richmond is respected by enlightened penologists as a man intelligently trying to better conditions. Whether he has had the support he needs in a state where a lot of power is still in the hands of courthouse rings which sometimes depend on the support of prison-camp guards I do not know. I'm ignorant about that—and I'm short of absolute confidence even about the conditions in jails and prisons in my own county and my own state. I wonder how many other Americans are just as ignorant about things just as near home.

The truth is that everywhere in America—except in Talmadge's Georgia—in recent months, years even, we have been hearing a great deal more about concentration camps in Germany than about conditions in jails in America. We have been listening with horror, as if horror were invented by the thick-necked torturers of Mr. Hitler. I certainly am not trying to minimize repulsion for these political and racial prisons of the Nazis. In the governmental order of even the most backward states in the United States there is no official insistence on sadism. But we have been contemplating cruelty as if it were altogether distant and totalitarian. My bet is that wherever in America anybody reads this piece cruelty in institutional secrecy may exist right now.

"In Pennsylvania," said the York *Gazette and Daily* man, "the victims of institutional brutality died; so all we could do was try to correct the conditions."

That is the universal American plan—the clean-up after the killing. It happens everywhere—and then, after the clean-up, the forgetfulness, or worse than forgetfulness. Today in the United States it could be almost set down as a universal rule that outside the federal prisons and a few others the wages paid prison guards are so low as to be almost calculated to attract none but the worst possible men. In spite of that, there is today a widespread delusion that in most places bad jail, prison, and institutional conditions can be considered in the past tense. Citizens do not know what happens in their prisons—and do not inquire. If they did, often they would find not brutality, which is generally easily hidden, but a political and pay situation which seems almost deliberately designed to make jails and prisons in America places we would view with horror if they were in Europe.

This Raymond Farris may be lying in York. There is plenty of unpleasant truth hidden in America just the same.

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

Three Tenant Families

LET US NOW PRAISE FAMOUS MEN. By James Agee and Walker Evans. Houghton Mifflin Company. $3.50.

THIS elaborate documentary of three Alabama tenant families succeeds at least in its principal function: its documentation. "Ultimately it is intended that this record and analysis be exhaustive, *with no details, however trivial,* left untouched" (my italics). It records and examines every single article in the possession of the families Woods, Gudger, and Ricketts, including a jar of menthol salve, the squeaking hinges of the Woodses' bedroom door, "the unlighted lamp which stands in the bare daylight in the beauty of a young nude girl" (*sic*), the crease in George Gudger's trousers, and a calendar of Mrs. Ricketts's advertising "——'s shoes" etc., etc., etc. The author's passion for the all-inclusive (I refer to Mr. Agee—Mr. Evans took the photographs) induces him not only to draw up this appalling inventory of the irrelevant, the incidental, and the relevant, but also to quote such stuff as: "*The Great Ball on Which We Live.* The world is our home. It is also the home of many, many other children, some of whom live in far-away lands. They are our world brothers and sisters." But behind all this rather pretentious whimsicality (a characteristic of a certain category of American literature for which the shade of Whitman ought to be impeached by the Society of American Authors), behind this I observe the figure of Mr. Agee in a posture of humility and supplication to the world in general and the three Alabama families in particular.

This book is just as much an act of violence as the worst poems of Whitman are acts of violence: by this I mean that they seek to achieve their ends by hammering desperately and cold-bloodedly on the sense of astonishment. For I see no other explanation of the fact that, halfway through the preface of the book, this sentence occurs: "The title of this volume is 'Let Us Now Praise Famous Men.'" It also goes to explain such a paragraph as the following:

> The text was written with reading aloud in mind. That cannot be recommended [the volume has 471 pages]; but it is suggested that the reader attend with his ear to what he takes off the page: for variations of tone, pace, shape, and dynamics are here particularly unavailable to the eye alone, and with their loss a good deal of meaning escapes.

The effort to encompass a whole world of things in the merely conscientious enumeration of them—in other words, in such an enumeration as that of Mr. Agee, with its microscopic concentration on objects simply because they happen to be there—is in my opinion denigrated by such a remark as that of James Cagney (I believe) when he got back from Europe. "It's dead fish," he said. This is the shorthand of true penetration and perspicacity: it is the creation of the symbol that renders the inventory unnecessary: it is the principle of selection at work to produce the metaphor as epitome. Ultimately it is memorable speech, that is, poetry.

But there is more to this remarkable book than a list of the families' furniture; it is also composed of poems, prose poems, and plain prose narrative. And when Mr. Agee gets down to his account of the abnormal relationships of the characters concerned, a sense of great natural dignity enters the writing and makes these passages take on the proportions of a major novel. Like Ernest Hemingway's writing, it becomes almost magnificent in its effort to be simple over issues which neither Mr. Hemingway nor Mr. Agee can ever wholly simplify. For human beings, even more than the world of objects, inexplicably transcend their own specifications. Thus in those passages devoted to descriptions of the behavior of the families among themselves I feel that Mr. Agee suspends the fairly hopeless business of tabulating action down to the last gesture and acknowledges the possibility of things happening between the lines. Then the dignity and, paradoxically enough, the idiosyncratic variations of the individuals are put across as by a kind of sleight-of-hand. And I take that to be one of the characteristic gifts of the good writer.

Summarily I would say that the virtues of this book are also its faults. For that generosity of sympathy which makes Mr. Agee feel so strongly about not omitting even ridiculous details from his book, in other words, his virtue of immense hospitality toward all things, is at the same time the vice of greed. His desire to establish a great memorial to these three Alabama families has ended in the accumulation of an edifice in which old boots, staircases, the exact texture of Mr. Gudger's overalls, and the number of hairpins in the possession of Mrs. Woods, all hang together like the articles discovered in aboriginal graves. But every now and then, from this extraordinary imbroglio, one of the figures of the Gudgers or Woodses or Rickettses rises and really looks at the reader with accusation and condemnation. Then the whole of the Alabama landscape appears behind this figure, with the social disparities and the domestic eccentricities lying about in a brilliance and clarity that never could result from any mere list of them. And at such moments this becomes a monumental book.

GEORGE BARKER

The Navies of the Pacific

THE ARMED FORCES OF THE PACIFIC. By W. D. Puleston. Yale University Press. $2.75.

NO MORE timely publication could be conceived than this authoritative analysis by the doyen of American naval writers of the armed forces now arrayed against each other in the Pacific. A fervid believer in the Clausewitz-Mahan thesis that war is but the continuation of diplomacy by other means, Captain Puleston begins his study with a brief but excellent outline of the conflicting policies of Japan and the United States, policies which may one day set their armed forces into motion and determine their strategies. This basic sketch of the political background of a possible clash in the Pacific is followed by a more detailed examination of the defense machines of the two countries: their sea, land, and air forces, their systems of enlistment, conscription, and

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training for both officers and men, the organization of their military hierarchies, the composition, role, and functioning of their staff systems; and, finally, of their central brains, the defense ministries, and of the supreme coordination of these ministries in the two opposing governments.

From this elaborate exposition of the organizational structure of the two sides the author turns to their prospective battlefield, examining in turn the main focal points of the naval strategy of the Pacific—Singapore, the Philippines, Vladivostock, the Japanese archipelago, and the Japanese mandated islands in the South Seas. Incidentally, he is emphatic in declaring that the strategic value of these islands as a barrier to an advance of the United States fleet westward has been grotesquely exaggerated.

The study centers in a detailed comparative survey of the opposing fleets, beginning with the age and constitution of their respective officer corps and enlisted personnel and continuing class by class, often ship by ship, with the results set down in a series of highly illuminating tables. The potential building capacity of the Japanese yards, the probable psychological reaction of the Japanese naval authorities to the situation created by the European conflict, the interruption of the Japanese navy's training and gunnery program as a result of the Chinese incident—these are only a few examples of the range and variety of factors taken into consideration in this brilliant piece of work.

The final chapter on the tactical and strategic aspects of a American-Japanese armed clash in the Pacific reveals Captain Puleston as a very strong supporter of an offensive strategy. Reiterating Mahan's warning against the fatal mistake of dividing the fleet between the two oceans, he gives vent in no uncertain terms to his conviction that, kept together, the United States fleet should be able to sweep like a cyclone across the Pacific to the Philippines and from there bring such pressure to bear upon Japan as eventually to force out its commander-in-chief to a desperate gamble. As Captain Puleston sees it, Japan's numerical inferiority is by no means offset by its strategic position, and the uncertainty as to the several lines of advance open to the United States fleet places it on the horns of a painful dilemma. The much-advertised "harassing attacks" by Japanese light craft from the mandated islands, in the author's opinion, could be expected to have no signal success, while this route would offer to American officers the best opportunity for dealing with the enemy piecemeal, particularly in view of the marked American superiority in the air, to which Captain Puleston devotes some of his most interesting pages.

HERBERT ROSINSKI

A Matter of Taste

PULITZER PRIZE POEMS. Compiled by Marjorie Barrows. Random House. $2.50.

THIS book, according to the cover, contains "important selections from every book of poetry that has won the Pulitzer prize." It also contains, before the selections begin, the complete list of winners, and of their publishers. Following the selections we are given thirty-five pages "about the poets"; these include biographies, bibliographies, remarks by some of the poets about poetry, and tributes. On the average, the poets get three tributes apiece. William Rose Benét gives most of the tributes, six; Louis Untermeyer gives five. The collection is not indexed.

Of the poets, Stephen Vincent Benét is given the most space, eighteen pages; MacLeish is next with sixteen; Lowell gets twelve; Robinson, eleven; Coffin, nine; Bacon, Fletcher, and Speyer eight each; Frost and Hillyer, six; Zaturenska, five; Wurdemann, four; Aiken, Millay, Dillon, and Van Doren, three each. Some of the items are familiar to the point of inevitability; Frost's Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening and Mending Wall, Robinson's Miniver Cheevy and Flammonde, Lowell's Lilacs, Millay's To the Not Impossible Him. Of the less familiar matter, George Dillon's The Dead Elm on the Hilltop and The Noise of Leaves seem to me the most memorable; there are other poems which have something, but in general the collection contains, in my opinion, more verse than poetry, and more pretenders than poets. If the compiler's ability to recognize poetry can be judged from her own literary style, it is of doubtful competence: one of her phrases, at least, deserves a kind of immortality, her reference to Conrad Aiken, "who was to become one of the most original and foremost of modern American poets."

What good does all this do? Well, for one thing, presumably the poets have been paid for this use of their poems. For another, the completeness of the evidence will no doubt afford considerable perverse satisfaction to those who think the whole Pulitzer-prize business is anything from a great pity to a god-damned outrage. These will find delightful items not only in the text itself but in the *obiter dicta*—in Thomas Hardy's sententious observation that "America has just two great works of art to its credit, recessive architecture and the poetry of Edna St. Vincent Millay"; in Carl Sandburg's tautological howler, "I am not sure what an authentic poet is, but I know Archibald MacLeish is one"; in Robert P. Tristram Coffin's triple definition, "Poetry is saying the best one can about life. . . . Poetry is the best arrangement of the finest thoughts. . . . It is the art of making people feel well about life." Some questions for graduate students suggest themselves here: (a) On the basis of Mr. Coffin's first definition, criticize the poetic value of "Dans ce bourdel ou tenons notre estat"; and "I must lie down where all the ladders start/in the foul rag-and-bone shop of my heart." (b) What is a fine thought? (c) Distinguish, on the basis of Mr. Coffin's third definition, between poetry and (1) medicine, (2) sexual intercourse. Finally, the book may make some money for the publishers; it will probably be purchased by many school and college libraries, and may even be adopted as a text in more progressive courses in literature.

Well, what harm does all this do? Probably not much either, for those who are capable of having their taste determined by it are presumably incapable of anything better; the others can reject it on instinct, or perhaps the sooner they get it crammed down their throats the sooner they will be revolted.

What should be said about the taste shown here is that, a little more refined, a little higher up the ladder, it is the same thing that devotes itself to queries on the book page of the New York *Times* on Sunday—you know, where somebody writes in to inquire about the lines

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A window of heaven was just ajar
And all unseen by the sentinel star
An angel slipped out from the jasper throne
And wandered to this world alone,

and next week the whole poem is located by Mrs. Henry D. Holmes of Montpelier, Mrs. Sarah Searing of Auburn, and several others.

The Pulitzer-prize award, on the evidence before us, is the apotheosis of this taste. The attitude it reveals toward poetry is utterly bourgeois, in the worst sense of the word. It is all so refined and respectable: the poems "are not the highly difficult poems appreciated by the few"; the poets are nice, wholesome college graduates, with decent jobs and summer places in the country. None ever seems hateful or jealous, subject to acedia or mood-swings; none ever seems bothered by the unadulterated plain or complicated fancy kinds of hell that poets get into. None sounds a bit like Rimbaud or Rilke. Perhaps not; but is it fair to lead people to think that American poets and poetry are as simple as all this?

Sixteen poets. Just for ducks, here is a list of sixteen others who did *not* win the Pulitzer prize during the years 1922-41. (Are Pound and Eliot ineligible? How about Auden, then?) The list: Léonie Adams, Louise Bogan, Hart Crane, E. E. Cummings, H. D., Langston Hughes, Kenneth Fearing, Stanley Kunitz, Robinson Jeffers, Marianne Moore, Phelps Putnam, Carl Sandburg, Wallace Stevens, Allen Tate, Sara Teasdale, William Carlos Williams. And one more for luck —Elinor Wylie. I do not admire all these with equal fervor, or claim that they all are better than any one on the given list. But dare anyone deny that, by and large, it is a much better list? Or make up your own, gentle reader; and see how valid it comes out. This cannot all be a matter of politics, or luck, or timing; in the final analysis it comes down to the taste of the selecting committee. And there, with regret, we must leave it.

ROLFE HUMPHRIES

BY COUNT CARLO SFORZA

SOME valuable data on the European scene is revealed in these recollections of the former Italian Foreign Minister, now in voluntary exile. Count Sforza knows the peoples of Europe and their leaders as few Americans can know them. And although directly on the spot when much of modern history was being made, he now carefully reports it in the light of more recent events, from the standpoint of an experienced, detached observer.

Innumerable instances of personally-obtained information crowd his pages: Benes on the eve of Czechoslovakia's betrayal; Weygand's amazing action at the last Cabinet meeting before France's fall; new facts on why Wilson failed; the possibility of another Central European federation after this war; and many more, from the Peace Conference in 1918 to the present.

Although Count Sforza has many times been in a position to say, "I told you so," this book is distinctly not in the vein of recrimination or self-justification. Instead, he makes several important factual and interpretative contributions to the discussion of world events.

THE TOTALITARIAN WAR —AND AFTER

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The Crisis of Intelligence

FISCAL POLICY AND BUSINESS CYCLES. By Alvin H. Hansen. W. W. Norton and Company. $3.50.

DEFICIT SPENDING AND THE NATIONAL INCOME. By Henry Hilgard Villard. Farrar and Rinehart. $3.50.

AFTER more than a hundred years of devotion to superficial apologetics and elegant irrelevancies, bourgeois political economy has, in the last decade, experienced a genuine renaissance. The world crisis of capitalism, which has already extended over a full quarter-century of war, revolution, and profound economic disturbance, and which is even now approaching a climax in the Second World War, has forced economists to come forward with a critical appraisal of the operation of the society in which they live. No American has contributed more to this rebirth of scientific economics than Professor Alvin H. Hansen; his latest, and in many ways his most important, book deserves therefore the utmost attention of every student of world affairs.

"Fiscal Policy and Business Cycles," like several earlier works by the same author, is not an integrated treatise, nor is it for the most part written exclusively for the economic specialist. It is rather a series of related but nevertheless independent essays covering a wide range of topics, sometimes impressionistically, occasionally with all the paraphernalia of formal theory, but always originally and suggestively. The essential independence of the parts enforces a considerable amount of repetition of important principles, which, however, is in no sense to be accounted a weakness. The style throughout is straightforward and unpretentious; what is lacking in grace is made up in intelligibility and compactness.

Part One is an attempt to place the depression and partial recovery of the 1930's in proper historical perspective. Many of the ideas are already familiar to those who have studied Hansen's well-known T. N. E. C. testimony, but they are here set out in greater detail and with more supporting factual evidence. Chapters IV and V are of particular value in dispelling widely held popular misconceptions. In the former Hansen shows that the fiscal policy of the New Deal was compounded very largely of "salvaging" operations and had little in common with constructive economic planning; in the latter he properly underlines the special and very probably non-recurring factors which accounted for the mildness of depression and the extent of recovery in Great Britain—such factors as accumulated shortages from the relatively depressed '20's, the abandonment of free trade, the availability of very cheap imports from hard-hit agricultural countries, and so on.

Part Two is devoted to The Changing Role of Fiscal Policy. The American tax structure comes in for severe criticism on precisely the right grounds, namely, the colossal drag which it constitutes on the level of consumption. The vital

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role which public debt has played since the very beginnings of capitalism is given full weight; in this connection the supporting data will come as a revelation to those who derive their picture of reality from the distorted mirror of the modern press. The United States national debt of today, about which until recently we heard so much clamor, is little more than half of our national income; by contrast, the English debt of 1818, after the Napoleonic wars, and again in 1923, after the World War, stood at a figure twice the national income.

Part Three contains the most difficult theoretical chapters. Here the interrelation of income, consumption, and investment is subjected to searching theoretical and empirical analysis. (The statistical appendix to Chapter XI on the relation of consumption to income, contributed by Paul A. Samuelson, is a gem.) Hansen senses the profound bias of our present economic order: in favor of expanding capital and against expanding consumption. Moreover, he makes of this the foundation stone of his explanation of our present economic dilemma, and he sees much more clearly than any other bourgeois writer that this difficulty would by no means be removed by that eternal panacea of the vulgar economist, a freely competitive price system. Chapter XV should be required reading for all those who plan to save the world à la Thurman Arnold. The upshot of this part is that we must have ever more investment, if not by business then by government, if we are to avoid a state of chronic depression in the future.

Part Four examines Investment Incentives, Past and Present, and comes to the conclusion that the role of government will in all likelihood be much greater in the future than it has been in the past.

Part Five, on problems of defense, is more topical than the rest of the book; it is also less substantial and, on a long view, less important.

What is to be said in criticism of this stimulating book is less a matter of detail than of fundamental approach. (The details can be safely left to that large number of professional economists who will doubtless find Hansen too bold and outspoken for their taste.) Hansen understands very well *what* is wrong with our present-day economy, and that is all to the good. But ask the question of this book: *why* have matters turned out as they have? You will not find much by way of answer. The modern world is very complex; rapid adjustments are needed, but certain habits and institutional patterns stand in the way. To deal with these problems we need "bold social engineering," and this will be possible only if we have the requisite "vision and courage." In the final analysis, therefore, the present world crisis is a *crisis of intelligence.* This is the inevitable implication of Hansen's position.

What Hansen does *not* see, and in this he is of course by no means peculiar, is that the economic troubles which he so skilfully describes and analyzes are manifestations of the real nature of the capitalist system itself. Capital, the dominant force in society, seeks its own self-expansion and cares not a hang for a smoothly working economy or for the consumption of the masses if they stand in the way. There is perhaps little in Hansen's analysis which is actually inconsistent with this interpretation, but what a difference it makes to the

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conclusion! There is no lack of intelligence in the world; the trouble is that too much of it is in the service of the highest bidder, whose ends are entirely different from those which Hansen too easily takes for granted. There is no lack of courage and vision in the world; the trouble is that too much of it is betrayed into fighting on the side of that economic frustration which Hansen rightly accounts the fundamental evil of our time. In reality the future is both brighter and darker than he will admit: brighter because he underestimates the resourcefulness of the human race; darker because he underestimates the power of capital. On balance, however, his is surely the less cheerful outlook, for there is little evidence that the intelligence of the human race has changed for several thousand years, while the power of capital is at most a few hundred years old.

Henry Hilgard Villard's book, "Deficit Spending and the National Income," is much more specialized than Professor Hansen's and will therefore appeal to a narrower audience. A large part is devoted to analyzing recent theoretical work, particularly that which has to do with the so-called "multiplier" concept, a problem also covered, though in less detail, by Hansen. The doctrinal review is well done, and it is certainly not Villard's fault if more subtlety has been expended on the subject than it deserves.

Perhaps the most valuable of Villard's positive contributions is a careful calculation of federal, state, and local expenditures for approximately the last ten years. The results, however, will hardly change anyone's estimate of the forces at work during this period. Villard's own conclusions are so cautiously stated and so carefully hedged about with qualifications as to upset none but the most unregenerate opponent of government spending.

PAUL M. SWEEZY

The Life of the Hunted

THE JOURNAL OF ALBION MOONLIGHT. By Kenneth Patchen. New York: Printed by the Author. $5.

OVER the pages of Kenneth Patchen's privately printed, handsomely presented "novel there emerge mental images of the religious art of the century preceding the advent of Francis of Assisi and his gospel of love. We recollect the sculptural symbols of a horror of the world in Lombard and Lucchese churches; the ferocious depictions of the state of being hunted and torn by ravening wild beasts totally masters of the situation. Symbols of similar terrors, similarly close to the night fears of small children, have reappeared in this wild, remarkable new opus.

Like "The Black Book" by Lawrence Durrell a bulking prose-fantasy in direct line of descent from "The Waste Land," "The Journal of Albion Moonlight" converts or seeks to convert to spiritual use a decadent lyrical material related to that of Eliot's epoch-making poem and merely more advanced in gaminess. Mournfully at times, satirically at others, and frequently in disgust it utilizes experiences of black rot and progressive mental and instinctive disorder and dissolution. There are feelings of bisexual impulses, and feelings of exposure to a degenerating influence destroying the power for happiness and good, and yearnings for the restoration of Jesus to suffering humanity—negated by some frigidity or

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paralysis of soul. Dramatically, symbolistically, with an all in all unhackneyed technique, a bold "wit," the sound and color of words, metaphorical characters, and appropriate rhetorical forms and cadences, Patchen has contrived—under the influence of Blake of the prophetic books and of Rimbaud and Ducasse—to erect images of these sad feelings into a personal, savage, festering little world. The overwhelming force of evil in things takes shape in bloodhounds who chase and overtake the wandering Albion Moonlight. One wonders: is Christianity once again, as in the twelfth century, becoming dualistic, pessimistic, Manichean?

Our curiosity, indeed, might be very keen were the book somewhat more forceful. This latest production of the immensely promising young Ohioan is on the whole a grave, individual, poetic piece of work. Still it is impossible to feel that many of its readers will concur in Henry Miller's verdict that "The Journal" is "a work of unmistakable genius." The lyric depth, the direct insight and belief characteristic of exalted creative powers remain too spasmodically evident in it to warrant the extreme judgment. The left-wing speeches occurring at several points and plainly without satiric intention strike one as rather childish. There is a convincing pathos and even sublimity in passages of the frequently bitter or violent prose. Other portions of it somehow fail to carry one away. Some of the despair of goodness in things is touching, but some of it wears the look of mere sullenness—while on occasions the author thrusts his head through his canvas to assure us about what he is depicting. And great poetry is made only with the greatest decision about and sincerity toward the universe.

The author's skill, talent, ingenuity are none the less very noteworthy. With the drama through which he expresses his gloomy material, Patchen helps current literature to acquit itself of two of its perennial functions. One is that of direct protest. His picture of this festering world is a present-day young man's bitter cry of disbelief in man and condemnation of an earth given over to ravening instincts; and—somewhat less admirably—his protest against American participation in the war. The sphere of ice in July, hounding dogs, decaying sex, multiplying impulses of murder, and blind search for Roivas—an anagram of Savior—is supposed to be a symbol of, a formation parallel to, the reality of the summer of 1940. The other perennial function is that of drawing the curtains of the couch about a humanity habituated to science and "harshly pressed upon by the importunities of excess of knowledge." I mean that this drama builds up a world outpacing man, fundamentally a dream world improvised by the author; and one of literature's functions ever has been the stimulation of belief in what lies past the limits of experience. Doubtless the fabulous, surprising sphere reflected in the journal of the hounded and murderous Moonlight is as foul, discolored, and monstrous as the night world of a dementia praecox. Still a good nightmare may have great value as an unconscious warning or purgation.

The performance itself is frequently effective; extraordinarily, actively imaginative. The scenes, images, and forms in which Patchen has expressed his feelings are remarkably apposite and various. His prose unfailingly has rhythm and never plays him false; finding the color of the occasion; grandly conforming to the confused movements of the hys-

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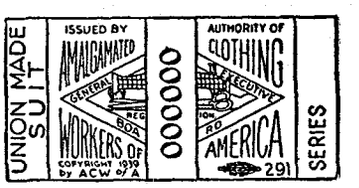

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terical mind of the "journalist." He possesses a gift of paradox: witness the charming pages of them commencing, "So it is the duty of the artist to discourage all traces of shame." In lines like "The word is the way something floats which cannot be seen/The word is the call of the tribe from down under the water/The word is the thing the wind says to the dead/The word is the white candle at the foot of the throne" this growing artist "fogs them in over the plate." And his exploitation of the vernacular is almost as telling as Cummings's—precisely as his technique bids fair in its freedom from staleness to rival Williams's invariably fresh and sharp one.

PAUL ROSENFELD

PUBLISHED THIS WEEK

THE VIKING BOOK OF POETRY OF THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING WORLD. Selected and Edited by Richard Aldington. Viking. $3.50.

JAMES MADISON: THE VIRGINIA REVOLUTIONIST. By Irving Brant. Bobbs-Merrill. $4.50.

BRITISH UNEMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS, 1920-1938. A Report prepared for the Committee on Social Security by Eveline M. Burns. Social Science Research Council. $2.75.

PARADISE LIMITED. An Informal History of the Fabulous Hawaiians. By Thomas Blake Clark. Modern Age. $2.75.

THE INDEPENDENT REGULATORY COMMISSIONS. By Robert E. Cushman. Oxford. $5.

TAR HEELS. A Portrait of North Carolina. By Jonathan Daniels. Dodd, Mead. $3.

THE HANDBOOK ANNUAL OF THE THEATER, MAY, 1940–MAY, 1941. By Wilbur Dingwell. Coward-McCann. $2.50.

SAVAGE LANDOR. By Malcolm Elwin. Macmillan. $4.

GOVERNMENT AND THE AMERICAN ECONOMY. By Merle Fainsod and Lincoln Gordon. Norton. $5.

THE NATURE OF MODERN WARFARE. By Cyril Falls. With an Introduction by Major George Fielding Eliot. Oxford. $1.25.

MY LAST MILLION READERS. By Emile Gauvreau. Dutton. $3.

THE HIGHLAND CALL. A Symphonic Play of American History in Two Acts. By Paul Green. North Carolina. $2.50.

SUNRISE IN MY POCKET OR THE LAST DAYS OF DAVY CROCKETT. By Edwin Justus Mayer. Messner. $2.

BIG FAMILY. By Bellamy Partridge. Whittlesey House. $2.75.

TWO ENDS TO OUR SHOESTRING. By Kathrene Pinkerton. Harcourt, Brace. $2.75.

THE CONCISE CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE. By George Sampson. Macmillan. $4.50.

THE HISTORY OF PUBLIC WELFARE IN NEW YORK STATE, 1867-1940. By David M. Schneider and Albert Deutsch. University of Chicago. $3.50.

THE TOTALITARIAN WAR AND AFTER. Personal Recollections and Political Considerations. By Count Carlo Sforza. University of Chicago. $1.25.

THE DEMOCRATIC SPIRIT. A Collection of American Writings from the Earliest Times to the Present Day. Edited, with an Introduction, by Bernard Smith. Knopf. $5.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE NAZI ECONOMY. By Maxine Y. Sweezy. Harvard University. $3.

METAPOLITICS. From the Romantics to Hitler. By Peter Viereck. Knopf. $3.

NEWTOPIA: THE WORLD WE WANT. By P. W. Wilson. Scribner's. $2.

BRAZIL: LAND OF THE FUTURE. By Stefan Zweig. Viking. $3.

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IN BRIEF

WHERE STANDS A WINGED SENTRY. By Margaret Kennedy. Yale University Press. $2.

This is an account of the months of May ("ever-increasing gravity") to September ("we can take it") of last year as they seemed to an evacuated mother and her family and friends. Bombs, for the most part, appear only reflected. What is directly given is the curve of feeling of a cross-section of the British people—incredulity, then stunned despair, rising to grim determination and restrained but well-earned confidence. The romantic preciosity of the author of "The Constant Nymph" and "Escape Me Never" and the inverted snobbery of the between-wars English intellectual are discernible here and there, but the book is fundamentally sincere and enlightening. The author says that people in Britain "have certainly taken life to pieces and found out what it is made of," and she makes one understand what she means.

THE UNTAMED BALKANS. By Frederic W. L. Kovacs. Modern Age Books. $2.

Bellicosity and political intrigue, occasionally joined with assassination, corruption, and misery, squalor and ostentation—these are the constituents of the traditional picture captioned The Powder Keg of Europe. In our current war, however, most of the Balkan countries have behaved rather like Ferdinand the Bull. After a short intermezzo of treachery and heroism they have disappeared behind the limelight of Nazi conquest. In this fascinating book, which in spite of its thorough historical and economic background reads like a political thriller, Mr. Kovacs advances the view that the Balkan peninsula is but a "sleeping giant" and may continue the peasant revolts that began in the sixteenth century. The Nazi conquest has solved none of its problems, but has merely created half a dozen new Macedonias. Mechanization of agriculture on a large scale and the curbing of chauvinism must be the preliminaries to a vaster unity which alone can alleviate the peasant's misery and grant cultural freedom to national splinters. It is regrettable that slight inaccuracies, such, for example, as the misquotation of George Dozsa's name and the statement that only one million Magyars had been under Rumanian rule, should mar this witty and useful volume.

THE CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE. Volume II: The Growth of the New Empire, 1783-1870. The Macmillan Company. $10.50.

This volume, like Volume I in the same series, is made up of chapters by many authorities, and combines scholarship with literary merit. It will be thought only less interesting by Americans than the first, which dealt with our own early history. What is often called the Second British Empire owed much of its success to the lesson learned from the loss of the first through the American Revolution, and its development in the nineteenth century paralleled that of the United States.

A HISTORY OF AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY: 1776-1940. By John Holladay Latane and David W. Wainhouse. Doubleday, Doran and Company. $6.

This is a second revision of a book which combines a close-packed and amazingly well-rounded factual account with a searching commentary. Six excellent new chapters bring the survey down to September, 1939, and reinforce, by the consistent following of the fundamental threads from Jefferson to Hull and Roosevelt, the view of the inevitability of our present policy in its broad aspects. This invaluable textbook and book of reference can also be read for pleasure.

DEMOCRATIC FRANCE. The Third Republic from Sedan to Vichy. By Richard Walden Hale, Jr. Coward-McCann. $3.50.

This comprehensive history is plainly the result of sifting a good deal of reading. In fact, the sifting is a little too obvious. The author is not an entertaining writer or a finished stylist, and his effort to tell only what happened seems to leave the book largely without a point of view. He also shows a tendency to write down to the presumably not very bookish reader. At best his book is useful as a review of recent French history and a reminder that the French are a politically active people whose present surface passivity cannot endure forever.

THE PASSING OF THE SAINT. A Study of a Cultural Type. By John M. Mecklin. University of Chicago Press. $2.

This is a sociological study of the causes of the medieval saint's rise and passing, and of his function, taking as examples St. Augustine, Bernard of Clairvaux, and St. Francis. On the surface it appears to be a scientific sociological study, but it is not disinterested. Implicit in the whole book and explicit in the Epilogue is the rejection of "the democratic myth," whose "empty formulas" the author subtly links with laissez faire capitalism. Woodrow Wilson's dream of a unified world was, he says, "merely a projection upon a world scale of the democratic ideal of Jefferson and Lincoln." This attitude is no new thing, but it should be pointed out wherever it appears in American letters. For it is fundamentally of a piece with fascism.

EDWARD LIVINGSTON: JEFFERSONIAN REPUBLICAN AND JACKSONIAN DEMOCRAT. By William B. Hatcher. Louisiana State University Press. $3.50.

Member of Congress from New York, Mayor of New York City, exile in New Orleans; then Louisiana legislator, codifier of its laws, Louisiana Congressman and Senator; finally Secretary of State and Minister to France under Andrew Jackson—Edward Livingston is outstanding in versatility and lasting achievement among American statesmen of the second rank. This scholarly, detailed biography, a valuable though slightly pedestrian contribution to American historical studies, places him in true perspective as an important figure in two transitional periods.

THE ART OF BIOGRAPHY IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLAND. By Donald A. Stauffer. With Bibliographical Supplement. Princeton University Press. Two volumes, $8.50. Separately, $5 each.

That the eighteenth century, as the transition period between the Renaissance and romantic individualism, was the ideal period for considering a man as an individual and as a part of the scene in which he lived is demonstrated by the method of modern "scientific" scholarship. Biographies important and unimportant are summarized, analyzed, and annotated in the first volume; the second lists practically every biography or autobiography published—though not all that were written—between 1700 and 1800. This is the really valuable part, since it will save a prospective student or reader from wading through catalogues and other source books. Even the main volume is more for reference than for reading.

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RECORDS

ONLY a few of Victor's September releases were sent to me; and the rest—which include things as important as Bach's Italian Concerto played by Schnabel, Mozart's Sonata K. 497 for piano four hands, Beethoven's Quartet Op. 59 No. 1, Handel's Concerti Grossi Op. 6 Nos. 1 and 5—I will comment on when I have managed to hear them somewhere (the difficulty is that in record-stores they can be heard only on small or otherwise inadequate machines, which I am unwilling to depend on for present-day orchestral and quartet recordings). And I hope that in a couple of weeks I will have the answers to the inquiries which are beginning to come in about phonographs.

Recent jazz records have offered only very few performances that are worth your attention: the exquisite muted trumpet solo—presumably by Buck Clayton—in the Basie Orchestra's "Goin' to Chicago Blues" (Okeh 6244), the Sidney Bechet New Orleans Feetwarmers' "When It's Sleepy Time Down South" and "I Ain't Gonna Give Nobody None of This Jelly Roll" (Victor 27447), the Ellington Orchestra's "Jump for Joy" (Victor 27517). Maxine Sullivan's singing of "If I Had a Ribbon Bow" (Columbia 36233) is charming; but Schubert's "Who Is Sylvia" is one song that doesn't lend itself to the Sullivan treatment it gets on the reverse side. And in "Close Shave" and "Bugler's Dilemma" (Victor 27567) the once exciting little John Kirby Orchestra is too slick and smart and pretentious for my ears.

As for older jazz records, Columbia continues its series of reissued classics with the volume "Hot Trumpets" (Set C-66, $2.50). This offers one of the famous Trumbauer Orchestra performances with Beiderbecke, "I'm Comin', Virginia" (36280), one of Bessie Smith's classics, "One and Two Blues," with Joe Smith (36281), and one of the good Teddy Wilson performances, "Why Was I Born," with a beautiful solo by Buck Clayton (36283). And with these it offers the Miff Mole "Alexander's Ragtime Band" (36280), with a Red Nichols solo for those who are presumed to be panting to hear a Red Nichols solo; the Red McKenzie "Darktown Strutters Ball" (36281), with the least impressive Muggsy Spanier solo I can recall; Louis Armstrong's solo with piano accompaniment, "Dear Old Southland" (36282), which is not what I would pick to give anyone an idea of Armstrong's playing at its most characteristic and best, and which is backed by the undistinguished Henry Allen "Body and Soul"; and the Ellington "Echoes of Harlem" (36283), with the Cootie Williams muted growling that I find unimpressive. The first three fulfil the real purpose of the series, which is simply to reissue the classics of hot jazz performance; the other five represent other purposes, having been selected to illustrate "the early white school of cornet," to demonstrate a questionable "development in Negro trumpet improvisation," and so on. And while pretentiousness gives us unimportant things, outstanding classics like the Bertha Hill-Louis Armstrong performances remain unissued.

Decca's "Gems of Jazz" Volume 3 (Set 242, $3.50) is vastly inferior to the first two volumes—the best in it being the Horace Henderson "I'm Rhythm Crazy Now" (18171) and Buck Washington's solo piano performance of "Old Fashioned Love" (18169). As for Decca's volume "Louis Armstrong Classics" (Set 233, $2.25), very little of Armstrong's work for Decca is outstanding, and even that little—"Savoy Blues," "Bye and Bye," "Hey Lawdy Mama," "Our Monday Date"—is not in this volume. The best in it are the first half of "West End Blues" (3793) and the end of "I Can't Give You Anything but Love" (2042).

The engaging Golden Gate Quartet is heard in "Jezebel" and "Daniel Saw the Stone" (Okeh 6204), and "Anyhow" and "Time's Winding Up" (Okeh 6238). The music in Victor's set "Smoky Mountain Melodies" (B-79, $3) and in Okeh's Burl Ives set "The Wayfaring Stranger" (K-3, $1.90) does not mean as much to me as it does to some other people, for whom I report that it seems to me to be sung and played well. Columbia's volume "Songs of the Red Army" (Set C-68, $2) includes the two records that were issued a year or two ago, and a record of "La Marseillaise" and "Le Chant du depart" sung in French (36266). The choral singing is excellent.

If you find the intensity and subtlety of the inflections of Spanish Cante Flamenco exciting you will want Columbia's volume of singing by La Nina de los Peines (C-59, $2.50). "Seguidillas" and "Peteneras" (36176) and "Saetas" and "Alegrias" (36178) were issued two or three years ago; newly issued in the set are "Solea" and "Soleares" (36177) and "Seguiriyas" and "Tango Flamenco" (36179).

Danny Kaye is amusing in "It's Never to Late to Mendelssohn" and "One Life to Live" from "Lady in the Dark" (Columbia 36163); but his "Dinah" (36194) is an even funnier example of the Kaye method (his singing of "Molly Malone" on the reverse side is terrible).

B. H. HAGGIN

DRAMA

The More Cuckoos . . .

I HAVE compiled no statistics, but anyone who cared to do so would discover, I think, that there are more melodramatic farces produced in our theater today than plays of any other type. The tired business man who used to like legs better than anything else in the world is now assumed to prefer corpses, and the lonely villa has replaced Maxim's or the Moulin Rouge as the most familiar setting. Instead of exclaiming "So this is Paris!" the principal character is more likely to make his entrance to announce that a dangerous criminal—preferably with sadistic tendencies—has just escaped and may be expected any moment, while those who go up to see etchings do not get seduced, they get killed.

Having philosophized upon this subject on at least one previous occasion, I shall confine myself this time to the announcement that the only two new plays to reach Broadway last week were fair specimens of the genre, both good enough to satisfy those who have a definite taste for that sort of thing, neither sufficiently original to go down in history. "The More the Merrier" (Cort Theater) is the funnier of the two, it being fundamentally a good old-fashioned, multiple-door farce with all sorts of people popping in or out at just the right or just the wrong moment and not taking its horrors too seriously. "Cuckoos on the Hearth" (Morosco Theater) is less fast and furious, with slightly more stress on the shivers. Both assume a blizzard to cut off communication, and, rather more curiously, both also assume a stalled bus to explain the appearance of unexpected guests. "Cuckoos" revives that good old standby of the ten-twenty-thirt, the red-hot poker held before the heroine's eyes; "The Merrier," with greater ingenuity, imagines a corpse on roller skates who is scooted persistently about the stage so that most of the dramatis personae will suppose him to be only a drunk. Both have spinsters taking quite unnecessary precautions to protect themselves against amorous advances.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

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Letters to the Editors

Work for the New Board

Dear Sirs: I note with pleasure the presence of J. Alvarez del Vayo among your five new contributing editors. I should like to suggest that you campaign with Señor del Vayo to compel attention to Spain when the professed democratic aims of the Churchill-Roosevelt eight points are carried out after the war. The Spanish crime should be cleaned from the slate and the chief Spanish offenders sent to the firing squad. I don't advocate a blood purge, but we can at least have done with Franco and de Llano, the butcher of Malaga.

Another matter which you might watch is the role of Russia in post-war Europe. How much cooperation with Russia is to be expected of England after Russia has outlived its usefulness as an ally? The end of the war may well mean the end of cooperation. Louis Fischer may then find his golden opportunity. HARRY J. MC ANDREW

Barre, Vt., September 17

Totalitarian Touchstone

Dear Sirs: Increasingly, in recent years, I have come to think of self-reference as the touchstone of totalitarianism. Self-reference as a principle is based exclusively on the formal logic of contradictories, rather than on the more normal logic of contraries. It demands, in other words, that every object in the world be identical with its subject, or opposite to it: it does not recognize legitimate similarities and differences between wholes.

This is, obviously, the curse of the totalitarian regimes. It is also the binding similarity between the Catholic church and the Communist Party. Communists regard as a theoretical enemy any radical who is anti- or even non-Communist. Radicalism has Communist value only when it strengthens the party —not when it contributes to the proletariat. Just so, piety has Catholic value only when it strengthens the church—not when it affects a soul.

I am moved to express these reflections by the news that the American Labor Party in Brooklyn has refused to indorse Dr. Laidler's candidacy for city councilman because of Dr. Laidler's support of Thomas against Roosevelt in 1940 and the suspicion that he is an isolationist. Despite his great record of thirty years' active devotion to liberal causes, despite his fine work in the Council last year, the Social Democrats of the A. L. P. have rejected Dr. Laidler. They do not recognize legitimate agreements and differences; they demand identity or opposition: "if you want our support, you must think only as we do, do only as we say." They want not a good councilman but a stooge. DANIEL LERNER

New York, September 12

Why Does the Army Gripe?

Dear Sirs: With regard to Why the Army Gripes, I offer a few comments lest Lavine's article should alarm *The Nation's* readers. I have been a private for almost a month at Camp Lee, Virginia, and thus have had an opportunity to observe general conditions pertaining to morale.

Lavine is mistaken in finding the fundamental cause of disaffection in the fact that relatively few of the recruits have any idea why they are in the army or what the army is for. On the contrary, the great majority of recruits have a very good idea of the "why" and the "what for." They gripe simply because the interests of the nation conflict with their personal plans and ambitions. Their disaffection, however, is surface deep only, and has no possibility of developing into a cancerous growth of rebellion.

The majority of us do not hate army life, for we realize its necessity; we just do not prefer it. This is not a mere verbal distinction. The shade of difference is important. If one defines good morale as a fanatical devotion to army ways, then the morale of the men is definitely low. But if good morale is to be defined rather as a willingness to absorb the teachings of the army and to become part of an efficient war machine, then the morale of the recruits is excellent.

The often-mentioned abuses heaped upon the soldiers—such as low pay and ostracism by the fair sex—are not fatal to good morale. As a matter of fact, in the town of Petersburg, not three miles away, the girls do not seem at all averse to accepting the indirect benefits of the national emergency.

It is true that at many points the army appears to be a bedlam of confusion, and this in certain instances causes some amount of cynicism and ridicule of superior officers. However, it is well to remember that this is all a new experience for most of our officers, who were but recently civilians themselves. I maintain that our officers are sincere and earnest in their efforts, and in my opinion there is more ground for anxiety about civilian morale because of business-as-usual complacency than about army morale.

PVT. BERNARD KAPLAN

Camp Lee, Va., September 18

The Colonel "Blows the Gaff"

Dear Sirs: About Colonel Moore-Brabason, British Minister of Aircraft Production, who achieved notoriety this month by expressing the hope that the German and Russian armies would destroy each other and leave Britain the dominant power on the Continent, I know only what the newspapers, the radio, and "Who's Who" have to tell. It is enough to reveal him as a typical Old School Tie, if not a Colonel Blimp. Son of a lieutenant-colonel, he was educated (in the purple of the British governing class) at Harrow and at Trinity College, Cambridge. Since 1931 he has been Member of Parliament for Wallasey, in Cheshire. As a Conservative (the Colonel is a member of the Carleton Club), he doubtless supported Baldwin and the late Neville Chamberlain in the appeasement of Italy and Germany. But whether he was among the 281 M. P.'s who still supported Mr. Chamberlain in the Commons debate following the Norwegian disaster in the spring of 1940 is not known to me.

We are told that the London press "blazed with reports" of the incident as Jack Tanner related it at a trade-union congress in Edinburgh, and that "an authoritative quarter" described his accusation as "misrepresentation . . . [of] a passage in an extempore speech." There the matter seems to have rested until the lone Communist M. P., William Gallacher, raised it, and a "scene," in the House of Commons on September 11. Actually the scene was deliberately provoked by Winston Churchill, who explained that the Colonel did not really mean what his words said. He then rejected Gallacher's suggestion that

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he get rid of the Colonel and other enemies of Russia, on the ground that Gallacher changed his opinions at the dictation of a foreign power.

The whole affair is, of course, Joe Stalin's concern rather than ours; and he obviously has been wise to the Colonel Blimps ever since Munich. Hence his non-aggression pact with Germany in August, 1939, and his refusal to join the war until Russia was attacked.

America is not yet attacked, except at sea. But we are being asked, more and more openly, to join the British in the "fight for freedom." Americans are contributing material support to the Russians as well as the British, and we are about to convoy supplies. Right; but we are not willing—at least I am not—to contribute to the betrayal of American ideas as those ideas were betrayed at Versailles by the British Colonel Blimps among others.

In view of the revealing words of Moore-Brabazon, as reported, I venture respectfully to suggest that our President state publicly, and very definitely, that we are not interested in what John Bright once called that foul fetish, the balance of power, or in making Britain dominant in Europe or anywhere else.

R. I. LOVELL

Salem, Ore., September 15

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THE NATION

55 Fifth Ave. New York

Challenge to Gene Tunney

Dear Sirs: While there is considerable sentiment in this country against Hitler, it is doubtful that this is sentiment against fascism as an institution. On this point it is interesting to note the ultra-respectability of Spanish Fascists compared with the low standing of Spanish Republicans.

The State Department recently refused a visitor's visa to Alvaro de Albornoz, a Spanish Republican of center political allegiance, yet the pro-Franco surrealist Salvador Dali is feted from coast to coast, another Franco painter, José María Sert, has just completed a commission for the Rockefellers, and the openly pro-Franco musician José Iturbi is becoming an American citizen. While American citizens who took the side of the Loyalists during the recent war in Spain are still being attacked from all quarters, people who supported Franco, Hitler, and Mussolini in Spain, and still support them *in Spain,* are considered good enough to build morale in a presumedly anti-fascist defense program.

The following letter was sent last week to one of Franco's supporters, the ex-pugilist Mr. Gene Tunney, who has not yet sent an answer:

In Father Coughlin's *Social Justice* of August 14, 1939, you wrote as folows: "As a matter of fact I have not become a partisan of Franco's cause since his victory but have worked and subscribed to his cause from the inception of the rebellion against the godless and inhuman government popularly known as the Loyalist government of the Spanish Republic."

Passing over for the moment your historically inaccurate description of the Spanish government, we hereby strongly challenge your fitness to assume "the responsibility of rallying together for unity and defense" the youth of this democracy in view of your staunch advocacy of the fascist cause of General Franco, a self-declared foe of democracy, an anti-Semite, a man who has said: "We must exile liberalism."

At the time when you felt called upon to defend yourself in Father Coughlin's magazine from a charge of lukewarmness toward the Spanish fascist movement, General Franco had already made clear to all the world his anti-democratic stand. Two years before he had told a United Press correspondent: "Spain will follow the structure of the totalitarian states, such as Germany and Italy. She will adopt corporative forms, for which the greater part of the formulas can be found in our own country, and will exterminate the liberal institutions which have poisoned the people."

To a correspondent of the *Leipziger Illustrierte Zeitung,* he said in July, 1937: "That which the German nation has achieved with its liberation struggle, constitutes, in many ways, a model which we shall have in mind for our own resurgence."

Today Franco has built the fascist state he threatened to build in 1937. He is a key figure in Hitler's New Order. Do you still support him?

Before you can honestly continue as a self-appointed leader of American youth, you owe to the democratic-minded people of this country a complete disavowal of your support of the fascist Franco, and a clear statement of disbelief in all forms of fascism, including the clerical, corporate state.

KENNETH LESLIE,
Editor, *Protestant Digest*

New York, September 16

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